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(54) VEGF ANALOGS (71) Applicant: Trophogen Inc., Rockville, MD (US) (72) Inventors: Mariusz W. Szkudlinski, Rockville, MD (US); Bruce D. Weintraub, Rockville, MD (US)

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- (60) Provisional application No. 60/808,106, filed on May 25, 2006, provisional application No. 60/723,917, filed on Oct. 6, 2005.

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	A61K 45/06	(2006.01)
	A61K 38/00	(2006.01)

(52) U.S. Cl.

(58) Field of Classification Search

None

See application file for complete search history.

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(57) ABSTRACT

Modified VEGF proteins that inhibit VEGF-mediated activation or proliferation of endothelial cells are disclosed. The analogs may be used to inhibit VEGF-mediated activation of endothelial cells in angiogenesis-associated diseases such as cancer, inflammatory diseases, eye diseases, and skin disorders

22 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets

Figure 1A



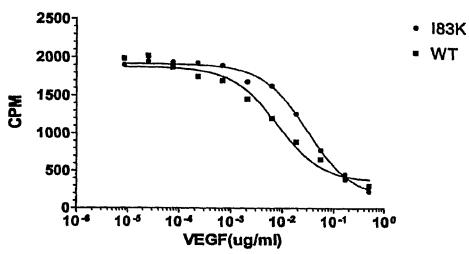


Figure 1B

HUVEC-2 Cell Proliferation Assay-Glo

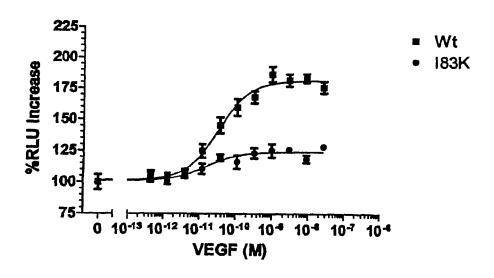


Figure 2A
Yeast VEGF Mutants Binding Assay

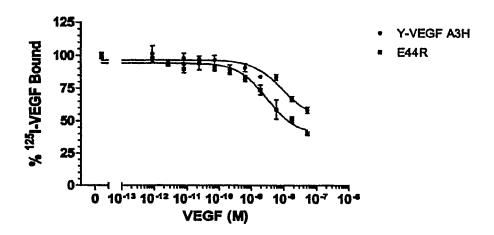


Figure 2B
HUVEC-2 Cell Proliferation Assay-Glo

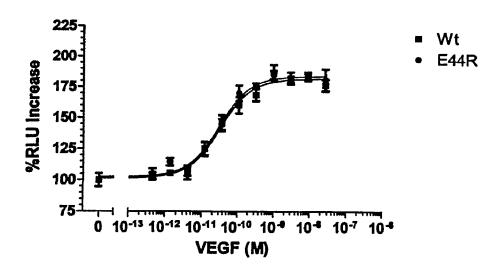


Figure 3A

Yeast VEGF Mutants Binding Assay

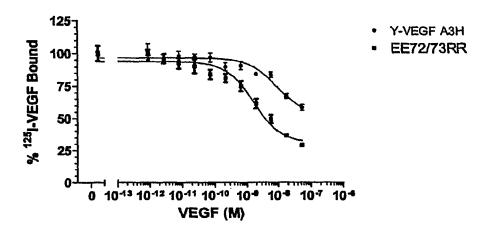


Figure 3B

HUVEC-2 Cell Proliferation Assay-Glo

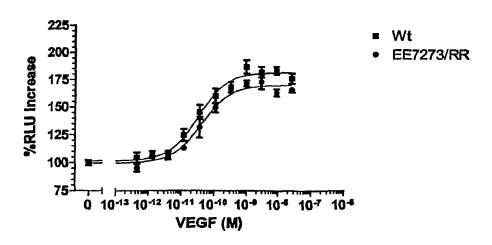
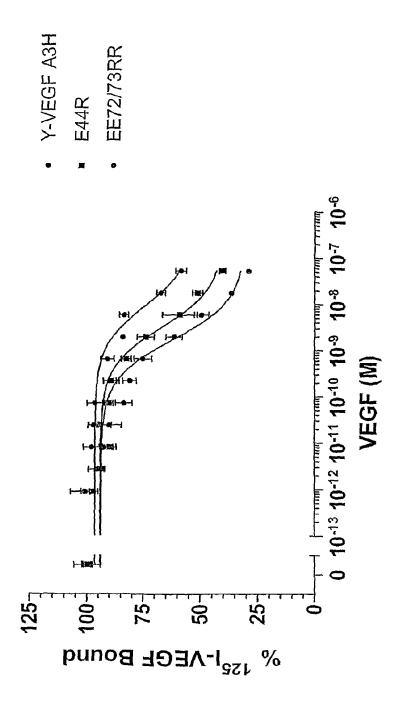


Figure 4

VEGF Competition Binding on KDR-Fc E44R and EE72/73RR



Yeast construct KDR Binding Assay

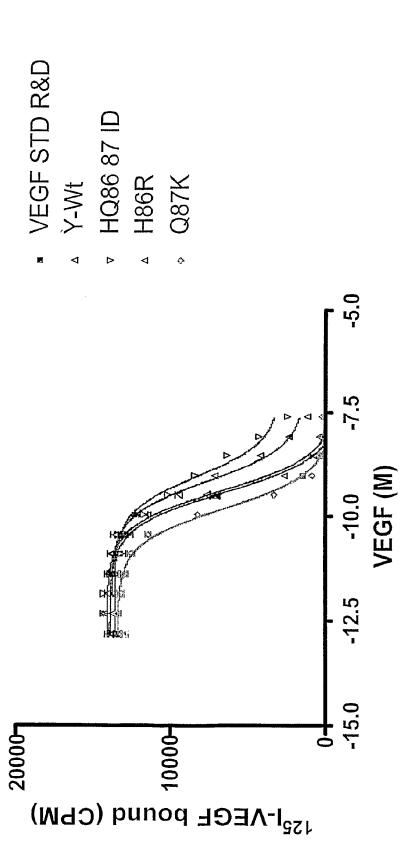
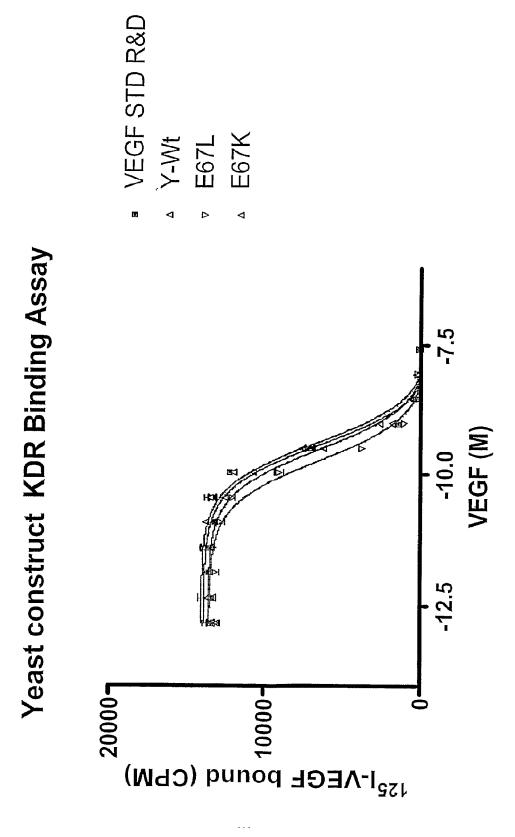


Figure 6



1 VEGF ANALOGS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/723,917, filed Oct. 6, 2005, and U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/808,106, filed May 25, 2006, which are herein incorporated by reference in their entireties.

SEQUENCE LISTING SUBMISSION VIA EFS-WEB

A computer readable text file, entitled "056815-5005-01-SequenceListing.txt" created on or about Jun. 20, 2014, with a file size of about 146 kb contains the sequence listing for this application and is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

FIELD OF INVENTION

This application relates to the design and use of vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) analogs as VEGF receptor antagonists to inhibit or reduce angiogenesis for the treatment of conditions and diseases associated with angiogenesis. The 25 application also discloses VEGF analogs that exhibit increased receptor binding affinity to native receptors such as KDR.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

Vascular endothelial growth factors (VEGFs) regulate blood and lymphatic vessel development. They are predominantly produced by endothelial, hematopoietic and stromal cells in response to hypoxia and stimulation with growth 35 factors such as transforming growth factors, interleukins and platelet-derived growth factor.

In mammals, VEGFs are encoded by a family of genes and include VEGF-A, VEGF-B, VEGF-C, VEGF-D and Placenta like Growth Factor (PIGF). Highly related proteins include 40 orf virus-encoded VEGF-like proteins referred to as VEGF-E and a series of snake venoms referred to as VEGF-F. VEGFs and VEGF-related proteins are members of the Platelet Derived Growth Factor (PDGF) supergene family of cystine knot growth factors. All members of the PDGF supergene 45 family share a high degree of structural homology with PDGF (see U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/813,398 which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety).

VEGF-A, VEGF-B and PIGF are predominantly required for blood vessel formation, whereas VEGF-C and VEGF-D 50 are essential for the formation of lymphatic vessels. Angiogenesis is the process by which new blood vessels or lymphatic vessels form by developing from pre-existing vessels. The process is initiated when VEGFs bind to receptors on endothelial cells, signaling activation of endothelial cells. 55 Activated endothelial cells produce enzymes which dissolve tiny holes in the basement membrane surrounding existing vessels. Endothelial cells then begin to proliferate and migrate out through the dissolved holes of the existing vessel to form new vascular tubes (Alberts et al., 1994, Molecular 60 Biology of the Cell. Garland Publishing, Inc., New York, N.Y. 1294 pp.).

Three type III receptor tyrosine kinases are activated by VEGFs during angiogenesis: fms-like tyrosine kinase (Flt-1, also known as VEGFR1), kinase domain receptor or kinase 65 insert domain-containing receptor (KDR, also known as VEGFR2 and Flk-1) and Flt-4 (also known as VEGFR3).

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KDR is the predominant receptor in angiogenic signaling, whereas Flt-1 is associated with the regulation of blood vessel morphogenesis and Flt-4 regulates lymphangiogenesis. These receptors are expressed almost exclusively on endothelial cells, with a few exceptions such as the expression of Flt-1 in monocytes where it mediates chemotaxis (Barleon et al., 1996, Blood. 87: 3336-3343).

VEGF receptors are closely related to Fms, Kit and PDGF receptors. They consist of seven extracellular immunoglobulin (Ig)-like domains, a transmembrane (TM) domain, a regulatory juxtamembrane domain, an intracellular tyrosine kinase domain interrupted by a short peptide, the kinase insert domain, followed by a sequence carrying several tyrosine residues involved in recruiting downstream signaling molecules. Mutation analysis of the extracellular domains of Flt-1 and KDR show that the second and third Ig-like domains constitute the high-affinity ligand-binding domain for VEGF with the first and fourth Ig domains apparently regulating ligand binding and receptor dimerization, respectively 20 (Davis-Smyth et al., 1998, J. Biol. Chem. 273: 3216-3222; Fuh et al., 1998, J. Biol. Chem. 273: 11197-11204; and Shinkai et al., 1998, J. Biol. Chem. 273: 31283-31288). Receptor tyrosine kinases are activated upon ligand-mediated receptor dimerization (Hubbard, 1991, Prog. Biophys. Mol. Biol. 71: 343-358; Jiang and Hunter, 1999, Curr. Biol. 9: R568-R571; and Lemmon and Schlessinger, 1998, Methods Mol. Biol. 84: 49-71). Signal specificity of VEGF receptors is further modulated upon recruitment of coreceptors, such as neuropilins, heparin sulfate, integrins or cadherins.

VEGF molecules interact with one or more tyrosine kinase receptors during angiogenesis. For instance, VEGF-A acts predominantly through KDR and Flt-1. VEGF-C and VEGF-D similarly are specific ligands for KDR and VEGFR3. PlGF and VEGF-B are believed to bind only to Flt-1. Viral VEGF-E variants activate KDR. VEGF-F variants interact with either VEGFR3 or KDR.

In addition to the two classical receptors, there are several membrane or soluble receptors modulating VEGF bioactivity and angiogenesis. For instance, neuropilin-1 and neuropilin-2 interact with both KDR and Flt-1, respectively, stimulating signaling of those receptors. Isoforms of VEGF-A, VEGF-B, PIGF-2 have been shown to bind to neuropilin-1 (Soker et al., 1998, Cell. 92: 735-745; Makinen et al., 1999, J. Biol. Chem. 274: 21217-21222; and Migdal et al., 1998, J. Biol. Chem. 273: 22272-22278). VEGF isoforms capable of interacting of interacting with neuropilin, i.e., those isoforms with exon 7 or 6 and 7, are also capable of interacting with heparin sulfate.

Although VEGF-A is the best characterized of the VEGF proteins, the molecular basis of the interaction between VEGF-A and KDR and Flt-1 is not well understood. Although VEGFR1 binds VEGF-A with a 50-fold higher affinity than KDR, KDR is considered to be the major transducer of VEGF-A angiogenic effects, i.e., mitogenicity, chemotaxis and induction of tube formation (Binetruy-Tourniere et al., supra). There is, however, growing evidence that Flt-1 has a significant role in hematopoiesis and in the recruitment of monocytes and other bone-marrow derived cells that may home in on tumor vasculature and promote angiogenesis (Hattori et al., 2002, Nature Med. 8: 841-849; Gerber et al., 2002, Nature. 417: 954-958; and Luttun et al., 2002, Nature Med. 8: 831-840). Further, in some cases Flt-1 is expressed by tumor cells and may mediate a chemotactic signal, thus potentially extending the role of this receptor in cancer growth (Wey et al., 2005, Cancer. 104: 427-438).

A single VEGF-A homodimer induces dimerization of two KDR receptors and autophosphorylation of their cytoplasmatic portions. Previous studies suggested that by analogy to

glycoprotein hormones, the charged amino acid residues in the peripheral loops of VEGF-A are also critical in providing high affinity electrostatic interactions with its respective receptors (Szkudlinski et al., 1996, Nat. Biotechnol. 14(10): 1257-63; Fuh et al., supra; Muller et al., 1997, Proc. Natl. 5 Acad. Sci. U.S.A. 94(14): 7192-7; Keyt et al., 1996, J. Biol. Chem. 271(10): 5638-46). However, it should be noted that many mutations in VEGF-A have no major effect on receptor binding affinity. Mutations in the peripheral loops of VEGF primarily have resulted in loss-of-function. Further, there 10 appear to be no previous amino acid substitutions increasing binding affinity to KDR more than 2-fold.

Angiogenesis is responsible for beneficial biological events such as wound healing, myocardial infarction repair, and ovulation. On the other hand, angiogenesis is also responsible for causing or contributing to diseases such as growth and metastasis of solid tumors (Isayeva et al., 2004, Int. J. Oncol. 25(2):335-43; Takeda et al., 2002, Ann Surg. Oncol. 9(7):610-16); atherosclerosis; abnormal neovascularization of the eye as seen in diseases such as retinopathy of prema- 20 turity, diabetic retinopathy, retinal vein occlusion, and agerelated macular degeneration (Yoshida et al., 1999, Histol Histopathol. 14(4):1287-94; Aiello, 1997, Ophthalmic Res. 29(5):354-62); chronic inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis osteoarthritis, and septic arthritis; neu- 25 rodegenerative disease (Ferrara, N., 2004, Endocr. Rev. 25: 581-611); placental insufficiency, i.e., preeclampsia (Ferrara, supra); and skin diseases such as dermatitis, psoriasis, warts, cutaneous malignancy, decubitus ulcers, stasis ulcers, pyogenic granulomas, hemangiomas, Kaposi's sarcoma, hyper- 30 trophic scars, and keloids (Arbiser, 1996, J. Am. Acad. Dermatol. 34(3):486-97). During rheumatoid arthritis, for example, endothelial cells become activated and express adhesion molecules and chemokines, leading to leukocyte migration from the blood into the tissue. Endothelial cell 35 permeability increases, leading to edema formation and swelling of the joints (Middleton et al., 2004, Arthritis Res. Ther. 6(2):60-72).

VEGF, in particular VEGF-A, has been implicated in many of the diseases and conditions associated with increased, 40 need for novel anti-angiogenic therapeutics. decreased, and/or dysregulated angiogenesis (Binetruy-Tourniere et al., 2000, EMBO J. 19(7): 1525-33). For instance, VEGF has been implicated in promoting solid tumor growth and metastasis by stimulating tumor-associated 43507). VEGF is also a significant mediator of intraocular neovascularization and permeability. Overexpression of VEGF in transgenic mice results in clinical intraretinal and subretinal neovascularization, and the formation of leaky intraocular blood vessels detectable by angiography, as seen 50 in human eye disease (Miller, 1997, Am. J. Pathol. 151(1): 13-23). Additionally, VEGF has been identified in the peritoneal fluid of women with unexplained infertility and endometriosis (Miedzybrodzki et al., 2001, Ginekol. Pol. 72(5): 427-430), and the overexpression of VEGF in testis 55 and epididymis has been found to cause infertility in transgenic mice (Korpelainen et al., 1998, J. Cell Biol. 143(6): 1705-1712). Recently, VEGF-A has been identified in the synovial fluid and serum of patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA), and its expression is correlated with disease severity 60 (Clavel et al., 2003, Joint Bone Spine. 70(5): 321-6). Given the involvement of pathogenic angiogenesis in such a wide variety of disorders and diseases, inhibition of angiogenesis, and particularly of VEGF signaling, is a desirable therapeutic

Inhibition of angiogenesis and tumor inhibition has been achieved by using agents that either interrupt VEGF-A and

KDR interaction and/or block the KDR signal transduction pathway including: peptides that block binding of VEGF to KDR (Binetruy-Tourniere et al., 2000, EMBO J. 19(7): 1525-33); antibodies to VEGF (Kim et al., 1993, Nature 362, 841-844; Lanai et al., 1998, J. Cancer 77, 933-936; Margolin et al., 2001, J. Clin. Oncol. 19, 851-856); antibodies to KDR (Lu et al., 2003, supra; Zhu et al., 1998, Cancer Res. 58, 3209-3214; Zhu et al. 2003, Leukemia 17, 604-611; Prewett et al., 1999, Cancer Res. 59, 5209-5218); soluble receptors (Holash et al., 2002, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 99, 11393-11398; Clavel et al. supra); tyrosine kinase inhibitors (Fong et al., 1999, Cancer Res. 59, 99-106; Wood et al., 2000, Cancer Res. 60, 2178-2189; Grosios et al., 2004, Inflamm Res. 53(4):133-42); anti-VEGF immunotoxins (Olson et al., 1997, Int. J. Cancer 73, 865-870); ribozymes (Pavco et al., 2000, Clin. Cancer Res. 6, 2094-2103); antisense mediated VEGF suppression (Forster et al., 2004, Cancer Lett. 20; 212(1):95-103); RNA interference (Takei et al., 2004, Cancer Res. 64(10):3365-70; Reich et al., 2003, Mol. Vis. 9:210-6); and undersulfated, low molecular weight glycol-split heparin (Pisano et al., 2005, Glycobiology. 15(2) 1-6). Some of these treatments, however, have resulted in undesirable side effects. For instance, Genentech's Avastin, a monoclonal antibody that targets VEGF, has been reported to cause an increase in serious arterial thromboembolic events in some colon cancer patients and serious, and in some cases even fatal, hemoptysis in non-small cell lung cancer patients (Ratner, 2004, Nature Biotechnol. 22(10):1198). More recently, Genentech has reported that gastrointestinal perforations were observed in 11% of ovarian cancer patients (5 women out of 44 in trial) treated with Avastin (Genentech Press Release dated Sep. 23, 2005). Similarly, the first VEGF-targeting drug, Pfizer's receptor tyrosine kinase inhibitor SU5416, exhibited severe toxicities that included thromboembolic events, prompting Pfizer to discontinue development (Ratner, supra). Given the wide variety of patients that stand to benefit from the development of effective anti-angiogenic treatments and the drawbacks of some known anti-angiogenesis treatments, there remains a

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

This invention encompasses VEGF analogs and nucleic angiogenesis (Lu et al., 2003, J. Biol. Chem. 278(44): 43496- 45 acids encoding the same, which exhibit strong binding affinity for one or more native VEGF receptors compared to wildtype VEGF. The invention also encompasses VEGF analogs and nucleic acids encoding same, which exhibit a dissociation of receptor binding affinity and bioactivity. Specifically, the in vivo and in vitro bioactivities of the disclosed analogs are substantially decreased compared to wild-type VEGF, whereas the binding affinity to one or more native receptors is about the same or substantially increased compared to wildtype VEGF. The VEGF analogs may demonstrate at least about a three to four fold increase in receptor binding affinity to a native receptor such as KDR.

> In one embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analogs are modified VEGF homodimers or heterodimers. These molecules contain at least one mutation which can be present in one or both subunits of the VEGF molecule. In one embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analog containing the one or more mutations is VEGF-A. The VEGF-A analog can be any VEGF-A isoform, for instance, an isoform of 121, 145, 148, 165, 183, 189, or 206 amino acids. In one embodiment, the VEGF-A analog of the invention is a VEGF $_{\!165}b$ isoform. In another embodiment, the VEGF molecule containing one or more mutations is VEGF-B, VEGF-C, VEGF-D or PIGF.

The present invention includes a VEGF fusion protein containing one or more mutations in one or more subunits. The VEGF fusion protein of the invention includes at least one VEGF subunit, i.e., subunit, fused to at least one subunit of a different protein, including, but not limited to, other cystine knot growth factors or glycoproteins. For instance, the invention includes a chimera VEGF analog in which the VEGF molecule contains a VEGF-A subunit fused to a VEGF-B, VEGF-C, VEGF-D, VEGF-E, VEGF-F, PDGF or PIGF subunit; a VEGF-B subunit fused to a VEGF-A, VEGF-C, VEGF-D, VEGF-E, VEGF-F, PDGF or PIGF subunit; a VEGF-C subunit fused to a VEGF-A, VEGF-B, VEGF-D, VEGF-E, VEGF-F, PDGF or PIGF subunit; a VEGF-D subunit fused to a VEGF-A, VEGF-B, VEGF-C, VEGF-E, VEGF-F, PDGF or PIGF subunit; or a PIGF subunit fused to a VEGF-A, VEGF-B, VEGF-C, VEGF-D, VEGF-E, VEGF-F, or PDGF subunit. The subunits may optionally be separated by a linker peptide. The invention also includes different isoforms of the same VEGF fused together, e.g., VEGF₁₆₅ 20 subunit fused to VEGF₁₆₅b.

In one embodiment, the VEGF analog is a single chain molecule. For instance, the VEGF analog of the invention includes two VEGF subunits, i.e., monomers, linked together via a linker peptide. One or both linked subunits can contain 25 one or more basic amino acid substitutions. Further, the linked subunits can be different VEGF protein subunits and can be different isoforms of the same subunit. For instance, the present invention includes a wild-type VEGF $_{\rm 165}$ subunit linked via a GS linker to a VEGF $_{\rm 165}$ subunit with a 183K 30 amino acid substitution.

In another embodiment of the invention, a VEGF-A, VEGF-B, VEGF-C, VEGF-D, or PIGF subunit or dimer comprising one or more mutations is fused to a toxin. The peptide of this embodiment can be useful for the targeting and 35 destruction of tumor cells.

The VEGF analogs of the invention include one or more basic amino acid substitutions, such as lysine or arginine, from the group of positions 44, 67, 72, 73, 83, and 87. In one embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analog contains a 40 basic amino acid substitution at position 83 and optionally one or more basic amino acid substitutions at positions 44, 67, 72 and 73. For instance, the invention includes a VEGF analog with a I83K mutation. The invention also includes, for instance, a VEGF analog with basic amino acids at positions 45 72, 73 and 83.

VEGF analogs with the basic amino acid substitutions described herein may contain additional amino acid substitutions to further increase receptor binding affinity to KDR and/or decrease receptor binding affinity to neuropilin-1. For 50 instance, the invention includes mutations at positions 146 and 160 in the which act to disrupt the neuropilin-1 binding site

Analogs of the invention can also contain additional amino acid substitutions which confer enhanced stability and 55 increased serum half-life. For instance, the invention includes amino acids substitutions which eliminate proteolytic cleavage sites such substitutions at positions 111 and 148.

The VEGF receptor antagonists of the present invention can exhibit increased plasma half-life as compared to wild-type VEGF. This may be accomplished by further modifying a VEGF analog by methods known in the art to increase half-life or, alternatively, increased plasma half-life may be an inherent characteristic of a VEGF analog. The VEGF receptor antagonists of the invention can also exhibit an 65 increase in rate of absorption and/or decreased duration of action compared to wild-type VEGF.

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The modified analogs of the invention act as VEGF receptor antagonists and thus provide a long awaited solution for patients suffering from a wide spectrum of diseases and conditions associated with angiogenesis. The VEGF receptor antagonists can be administered to a patient alone or in conjunction with another VEGF receptor antagonist, an anticancer drug, or an anti-angiogenesis drug for the treatment of disease associated with angiogenesis, including but not limited to, solid tumor cancers, hemangiomas, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, septic arthritis, asthma, atherosclerosis, idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, vascular restenosis, arteriovenous malformations, meningiomas, neovascular glaucoma, psoriasis, Kaposi's Syndrome, angiofibroma, hemophilic joints, hypertrophic scars, Osler-Weber syndrome, pyogenic granuloma, retrolental fibroplasias, scleroderma, trachoma, von Hippel-Lindau disease, vascular adhesion pathologies, synovitis, dermatitis, neurological degenerative diseases, preeclampsia, unexplained female infertility, endometriosis, unexplained male infertility, pterygium, wounds, sores, skin ulcers, gastric ulcers, and duodenal ulcers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1A is a graph comparing binding of the I83K mutant and wild-type VEGF-A to KDR. FIG. 1B is a graph showing a decrease in proliferation of HUVEC-2 endothelial cells in the presence of the I83K VEGF-A mutant compared to wild-type VEGF-A.

FIG. **2**A is a graph comparing binding of the E44R analog and wild-type VEGF-A to KDR. FIG. **2**B is a graph comparing HUVEC-2 cell proliferation in the presence of the E44R VEGF-A analog versus wild-type VEGF-A.

FIG. 3A is a graph comparing binding of the E72R+E73R VEGF mutant and wild-type VEGF-A to KDR. FIG. 3B is a graph comparing HUVEC-2 cell proliferation in the presence of the E72R+E73R VEGF mutant versus wild-type VEGF-A.

FIG. 4 is a graph comparing binding of E44R and EE72/73RR mutants to wild-type VEGF-A.

FIG. 5 is a graph comparing binding of Q87K mutant to wild-type VEGF-A.

FIG. **6** is a graph comparing binding of E67K mutant to wild-type VEGF-A.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides modified angiogenic growth factors of the vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) family which exhibit surprising activity as VEGF receptor antagonists. As VEGF receptor antagonists, the compounds of the invention have "anti-angiogenic" properties. Being "modified" means that, while the protein contains an amino acid sequence which differs from a wild-type VEGF of interest, i.e., human VEGF or animal VEGF, the sequence has not been changed such that it is identical to the known VEGF sequence of other species. The terms "mutated" and "substituted" are used interchangeably herein to refer to modified amino acid residues. The terms "modified VEGF molecules", "modified VEGF proteins", "VEGF analogs", "VEGF receptor antagonists", "VEGF chimeras", "VEGF fusion proteins" and "VEGF single chain molecules" are used interchangeably herein to refer to modified VEGF-A, VEGF-B, VEGF-C, VEGF-D, and PIGF analog molecules.

"Antagonists" are used interchangeably herein to refer to molecules which act to block, inhibit or reduce the natural, biological activities of VEGF, such as the induction of angiogenesis. The term "anti-angiogenic" as used herein means

that the modified VEGF molecules of the invention block, inhibit or reduce the process of angiogenesis, or the process by which new blood or lymphatic vessels form from pre-existing vessels. The activities of the VEGF analogs of the invention disrupt normal VEGF/receptor signaling which usually occurs when VEGF binds to a receptor. Accordingly, the analogs of the invention are VEGF receptor antagonists. Without wishing to be bound by a theory, it is believed that the VEGF analogs of the invention disrupt the dimerization of KDR necessary for signaling.

Inhibition of angiogenesis may be complete or partial. The VEGF receptor antagonist may inhibit angiogenesis at least about 5%, at least about 10%, at least about 20%, at least about 25%, at least about 30%, at least about 40%, at least about 50%, at least about 60%, at least about 70%, at least about 80%, at least about 90%, and at least about 100% in vitro and in vivo. Inhibition of angiogenesis can be measured by a skilled artisan by methods known in the art. The determination of inhibition of angiogenesis can include the use of negative and/or positive controls. For instance, a skilled artisan can conclude that a VEGF analog of the invention inhibits VEGF-induced angiogenesis by comparing angiogenesis in a subject treated with a VEGF analog of the invention to a similar subject not treated with a VEGF analog.

The modified VEGF molecules of the invention display 25 increased receptor binding affinity or similar receptor binding affinity to one or more native VEGF receptors compared to that of wild-type VEGF. As used herein, a native VEGF receptor is an unmodified receptor that specifically interacts with VEGF. For instance, an endogenous VEGF receptor is a 30 native VEGF receptor. In one embodiment of the invention, the native receptor is KDR. KDR is a receptor of VEGF-A, VEGF-C, VEGF-D, VEGF-E and VEGF-F. In another embodiment, the native receptor is Flt-1. Flt-1 is a receptor of VEGF-A, VEGF-B and PIGF.

"Receptor binding affinity" refers to the ability of a ligand to bind to a receptor in vivo or in vitro and can be assessed by methods readily available in the art including, but not limited to, competitive binding assays and direct binding assays. As used herein, receptor binding affinity refers to the ability of 40 VEGF molecules to bind to native VEGF receptors, including, but not limited to, Flt-1 (also known as VEGF-R1), KDR (also known as VEGF-R2) and Flt-4 (also known as VEGF-R3). For instance, the modified VEGF-A molecules of the invention display increased binding receptor affinity or simi- 45 lar binding affinity to KDR compared to wild-type VEGF-A. In one embodiment, the increase in receptor binding affinity of the modified VEGF molecules of the invention is at least about 1.25 fold, at least about a 1.5 fold, at least about a 1.75 fold, at least about 2 fold, at least about 3 fold, at least about 50 4 fold, at least about 5 fold, at least about 6 fold, at least about 7 fold, at least about 8 fold, at least about 9 fold or at least about 10 fold greater than that of wild-type VEGF.

In another embodiment, the modified VEGF exhibits a receptor binding affinity to KDR and/or other receptor that is 55 involved in angiogenesis that is similar or comparable to that of wild-type VEGF. Similar or comparable receptor binding affinity is at least about 75%, at least about 80%, at least about 85%, at least about 90%, at least about 95%, or at least about 97% or more of that of wild-type VEGF. For instance, the 60 invention includes VEGF-A analogs exhibiting about 75% to 85%, about 85% to 95% and about 95% to 100% the receptor binding affinity exhibited by wild-type VEGF.

The present invention also includes VEGF analogs which display increased or similar receptor binding affinity to at least one native receptor but display decreased receptor binding affinity to another native receptor. For instance, VEGF-A

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analogs of the invention may display increased or similar receptor binding affinity to KDR compared to wild-type VEGF-A, but may display decreased receptor binding affinity to Flt-1, neuropilin-1 or neuropilin-2 compared to wild-type VEGF-A.

The VEGF analogs of the invention also display a decrease in bioactivity compared to wild-type VEGF. "Bioactivity" refers to the natural, biological activities of VEGF in vivo and in vitro, including, but not limited to, the ability of VEGF to induce cell proliferation in endothelial cells. A decrease in bioactivity results in a decrease in angiogenesis. In one embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analogs of the invention display a decrease in bioactivity compared to wild-type VEGF of the same isoform. For instance, a VEGF 165 analog of the invention can display a decrease in bioactivity compared to wild-type VEGF 165, and a VEGF 165 b analog can display a decrease in bioactivity compared to wild-type VEGF 165b.

Bioactivity can be assessed by several methods known in the art, including, but not limited to, in vitro cell viability assays which assay the viability of endothelial cells such as human umbilical vein endothelial cells (HUVEC) upon exposure to VEGF. A decrease in endothelial cell viability of at least about 5%, at least about 15%, at least about 25%, at least about 30%, at least about 35%, at least about 45%, at least about 35%, at least about 40%, at least about 45%, at least about 50%, at least about 90%, or at least about 95% or more compared to resulting from exposure to wild-type VEGF is indicative of a decrease in bioactivity.

Bioactivity can be assessed in vivo as well. For instance, bioactivity can be assessed in vivo in a subject with a tumor by detecting a lack of increase in angiogenesis around a tumor. The detection of a lack of increase in angiogenesis can be accomplished by several methods known in the art including, but not limited to, an in vivo matrigel migration assay, a disc angiogenesis assay, an assay comprising a dorsal skinfold chamber in mice, a corneal transplant and a sponge implant model of angiogenesis. In one embodiment, angiogenesis is assessed by comparing angiogenesis of and around the tumor to that of a tumor of similar type, size and location in an untreated subject. Biopsy methods as known in the art can be used to extract tissue and analyze for vessel formation.

"Dissociation" of receptor binding affinity and bioactivity refers to the concept that receptor binding affinity and bioactivity are not correlated. In comparison, receptor binding affinity and bioactivity are correlated for wild-type VEGF proteins such as wild-type VEGF-A. An increase in receptor binding ability, for example, would be expected to result in an increase in bioactivity for wild-type VEGF-A. On the other hand, the modified VEGF molecules of the invention demonstrate a similar receptor binding affinity or an increase in receptor binding affinity as compared to wild-type VEGF but a decrease in bioactivity as compared to wild-type VEGF.

Mammalian VEGFs are produced in multiple isoforms due to alternative splicing of a family of related genes. The present invention describes VEGF analogs which correspond to VEGF isoforms involved in angiogenesis. The VEGF analogs of the present invention can be created using any VEGF isoform unless otherwise indicated.

VEGF-A can exist in isoforms including, but not limited to, 121, 145, 148, 165, 183, 189, and 206 amino acids, respectively. The three main mRNA species are VEGF₁₂₁, VEGF₁₆₅ and VEGF₁₈₉. As used herein, VEGF₁₂₁ (SEQ ID NO.: 6), VEGF₁₄₅ (SEQ ID NO.: 8), VEGF₁₄₈ (SEQ ID NO.: 10), VEGF₁₆₅ (SEQ ID NO.: 4), VEGF₁₆₅ (SEQ ID NO.: 13), VEGF₁₈₃ (SEQ ID NO.: 15), VEGF₁₈₉ (SEQ ID NO.: 17) and

VEGF $_{206}$ (SEQ ID NO.: 19) are isoforms of VEGF-A capable of being modified to possess anti-angiogenic properties. The amino acid positions described herein are based on a VEGF molecule lacking a leader sequence such as the leader sequence of SEQ ID NO.: 3. The amino acid sequences of VEGF-A isoforms with leader sequence are the sequences of SEQ ID NOs.: 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14, 16 and 18.

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The various isoforms of VEGF-A share a common aminoterminal domain consisting of 110 amino acids. VEGF-A isoforms have a receptor binding domain encoded by exons 102-5. The most notable difference between the isoforms are found in the neuropilin and heparin binding domains which are encoded by exons 6a, 6b, 7a and 7b.

The most common VEGF-A isoform is VEGF $_{165}$. The nucleic acid encoding VEGF $_{165}$ is the sequence of SEQ ID 15 NO.: 1. Recently, an endogenous splice variant referred to as VEGF $_{165}$ b was described which contains sequences encoded by exon 9, instead of exon 8, at the carboxy terminus. The nucleic acid molecule encoding this protein is the sequence of SEQ ID NO.: 11. VEGF $_{165}$ b (SEQ ID NO.: 12 with leader sequence; SEQ ID NO.: 13 without leader sequence) inhibited VEGF signaling in endothelial cells when added with VEGF $_{165}$ (see Woolard et al., 2004, Cancer Research. 64: 7822-7835; see also U.S. 2005/0054036 which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety).

In one embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analogs are VEGF-A analogs. VEGF-A analogs include "modified VEGF-A proteins", "VEGF-A receptor antagonists", "VEGF-A chimeras", "VEGF-A fusion proteins" and "VEGF-A single chain molecules." A VEGF-A analog is a 30 VEGF-A molecule containing at least one modified VEGF-A subunit.

VEGF-B exists in two isoforms, VEGF-B $_{167}$ (SEQ ID NO.: 48) and VEGF-B $_{186}$ (SEQ ID NO.: 50) (Makinen et al., 1999, 3. Biol. Chem. 274: 21217-21222). In one embodiment 35 of the invention, the VEGF analog is a VEGF-B analog. VEGF-B analogs include "modified VEGF-B proteins", "VEGF-B analogs", "VEGF-B receptor antagonists", "VEGF-B chimeras", "VEGF-B fusion proteins" and "VEGF-B single chain molecules." A VEGF-B analog is a 40 VEGF-B molecule containing at least one modified VEGF-B subunit.

VEGF-C is produced as a propeptide (SEQ ID NO.: 51) that is proteolytically cleaved to form a 21-kd active protein (Nicosia, 1998, Am. J. Path. 153: 11-16). In one embodiment 45 of the invention, the VEGF analog is a VEGF-C analog. VEGF-C analogs include "modified VEGF-C proteins", "VEGF-C analogs", "VEGF-C receptor antagonists", "VEGF-C chimeras", "VEGF-C fusion proteins" and "VEGF-C single chain molecules." A VEGF-C analog is a 50 VEGF-C molecule containing at least one modified VEGF-C subunit.

VEGF-D is also produced as a propeptide (SEQ ID NO.: 52) that is proteolytically cleaved to form an active protein. VEGF-D is 48% identical to VEGF-C (Nicosia, supra). In one 55 embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analog is a VEGF-D analog. VEGF-D analogs include "modified VEGF-D proteins", "VEGF-D analogs", "VEGF-D receptor antagonists", "VEGF-D chimeras", "VEGF-D fusion proteins" and "VEGF-D single chain molecules." A VEGF-D analog is a 60 VEGF-D molecule containing at least one modified VEGF-D subunit.

Placenta growth factor (PIGF) exists in three isoforms, PIGF-1 (SEQ ID NO.: 54), PIGF-2 (SEQ ID NO.: 56) and PIGF-3 (SEQ ID NO.: 58). PIGF-2 contains an exon 6 65 encoded peptide which bestows heparin and neuropilin-1 binding properties absent in the other two isoforms. Both

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PIGF-1 and PIGF-2 have been reported as being capable of inducing endothelial cell migration (Migdal et al., 1998, J. Biol. Chem. 273: 22272-22278). In one embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analog is a PIGF analog. In another embodiment, the VEGF analog is PIGF-1 or PIGF-2. PIGF analogs include "modified PIGF proteins", "PIGF analogs", "PIGF receptor antagonists", "PIGF chimeras", "PIGF fusion proteins" and "PIGF single chain molecules." PIGF analogs are PIGF molecules with at least one modified PIGF subunit.

The VEGF analogs of the invention are modified animal or human VEGF molecules. In one embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analogs are mammalian VEGF molecules. In another embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analogs are avian VEGF molecules. The VEGF analogs of the present invention include, but are not limited to, modified primate, canine, feline, bovine, equinine, porcine, ovine, murine, rat and rabbit VEGF molecules. In one embodiment, the animal VEGF analog is a VEGF-A analog. For instance, the animal VEGF-A analog of the invention can be an animal VEGF₁₆₅ or VEGF₁₆₅b analog.

The modified VEGF molecules of species other than human have substitutions at positions corresponding to those in the modified human VEGF molecules disclosed herein and may be identified using any alignment program, including but not limited to DNASIS, ALIONment, SIM and GCG programs such as Gap, BestFit, FrameAlign, and Compare. As can be appreciated by one of skill in the art, the corresponding amino acid to be replaced with a basic amino acid may not be identical to the one in human VEGF-A. For instance, a skilled artisan would appreciate that a glutamate (E) may correspond to a different acidic amino acid in an animal such as aspartate (D).

In another embodiment, the corresponding amino acid is identified as being located in the same general position within a defined structure, for instance, on an outer loop structure. The structure of a protein can be predicted using software based on the amino acids of the protein. Accordingly, one of skill in the art can use software that predicts protein folding and loop structure to identify the corresponding position in a related protein.

Design of VEGF Receptor Antagonists

The VEGF receptor antagonists encompassed by the present invention may be designed by comparing the amino acid sequences of the VEGF of interest to that of other species to identify basic residues in the proteins of VEGF of other species. For instance, a VEGF-A molecule of instance can be designed by comparing a human VEGF-A to that of another species. Such methods are disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,361, 992, which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety. Consideration may also be given to the relative biological activity of VEGF from various species as to which species to choose for comparison and amino acid substitution. Further homology modeling based on the structure of related glycoproteins is useful to identify surface-exposed amino acid residues. Homology modeling can be performed by methods generally know in the art, including, but not limited to, the use of protein modeling computer software.

The present invention also provides a modified VEGF protein, wherein the modified VEGF comprises an amino acid(s) substituted at a position(s) corresponding to the same amino acid position in a VEGF protein from another species having an increased binding affinity and/or decreased bioactivity over the wild-type VEGF. For example, snake venom VEGF-F binds to KDR with high affinity and strongly stimulates proliferation of vascular endothelial cells in vitro. One can compare human VEGF-A to snake venom VEGF, design human VEGF-A proteins with amino acid substitutions at one

or more positions where the snake venom and human sequences differ, construct human VEGF-A proteins with the selected changes, and administer the modified human VEGF-A to humans. Although snake venom VEGF-F demonstrates an increase in KDR binding affinity and bioactivity, 5 i.e., binding affinity and bioactivity are correlated, compared to human VEGF, one of skill in the art would understand that amino acid substitutions could be empirically tested to identify amino acid substitutions which increase receptor binding affinity but decrease or have no effect on bioactivity. An amino acid substitution which increases receptor binding affinity and/or decreases or has no effect on bioactivity may then be combined with one or more other amino acid substitutions known to increase receptor binding affinity and/or decrease bioactivity.

In another embodiment of the invention, the modified VEGF molecule can contain one or more amino acids substituted at a position(s) corresponding to the same amino acid position in a VEGF homolog that naturally exists in arthropods. In arthropods, a single growth factor performs the tasks 20 performed by PDGF and VEGF in higher organisms. One of skill in the art would understand that amino acid substitutions could be empirically tested to identify amino acid substitutions which increase receptor binding affinity but decrease or have no effect on bioactivity, or, alternatively, have little 25 effect on receptor binding affinity but decrease bioactivity.

Further, the present invention provides a modified VEGF, wherein the modified VEGF comprises a basic amino acid(s) substituted at a position(s) corresponding to the same amino acid in a different VEGF or VEGF isoform or closely related 30 glycoprotein such as proteins in the PDGF family from the same species or different species. For example, VEGF₁₆₅ can be compared to PDGF from the same species and amino acid substitutions made to the VEGF protein based on any sequence divergence. A skilled artisan can compare two or 35 more sequences of VEGF proteins or VEGF-related proteins using methods known in the art such as the use of alignment software, including but not limited to, DNASIS, ALIONment, SIM and GCG programs such as Gap, BestFit, FrameAlign, and Compare.

In another aspect of the invention, the amino acid substitutions described herein can be incorporated into closely related proteins such as VEGF-E (SEQ ID NO.: 60), VEGF-F (SEQ ID NO.: 62) and PDGF (SEQ ID NO.: 63 and SEQ ID NO.: 64). For instance, one or more basic amino acid substitutions selected from the group consisting of E67, E72, E73, I83 and Q87 can be compared to a PDGF isoform from the same species and amino acid substitutions made to the PDGF isoform.

The VEGF analogs of the invention may be designed to display a decreased receptor binding affinity to Flt-1 receptors compared to wild-type VEGF-A. Although these analogs display a decreased receptor binding affinity to Flt-1, they may have an increased or comparable receptor binding affinity to KDR compared to wild-type VEGF-A.

The VEGF analogs of the invention may be designed to display a decreased receptor binding affinity to co-receptors, including, but not limited to, neuropilin-1 or neuropilin-2 compared to that of wild-type VEGF. Analogs with decreased receptor binding affinity to neuropilin-1 or neuropilin-2 may 60 have increased or similar receptor binding affinity to KDR, Flt-1 or VEGR3 compared to that of wild-type VEGF. For instance, VEGF-A analogs can be designed which exhibit decreased receptor binding affinity to neuropilin-1 and increased receptor binding affinity to KDR and/or Flt-1. In 65 one embodiment of the invention, the VEGF-A displaying decreased receptor binding affinity to neuropilin-1 is an ana-

log designed in the VEGF $_{165}$ b splice variant. In another embodiment, VEGF- $_{167}$ and PIGF-2 analogs can be designed which exhibit decreased receptor binding affinity to neuropilin-1 and increased binding affinity to Flt-1.

In one embodiment of the invention, VEGF analogs are designed to exhibit decreased receptor binding affinity to neuropilin-1 or neuropilin-2 compared to wild-type VEGF by disrupting the VEGF neuropilin binding site. This can be accomplished by reducing the number of cysteine amino acid residues in the neuropilin-1 receptor binding domain. For instance, VEGF₁₆₅ analogs can be designed to disrupt the neuropilin 1 binding site in VEGF₁₆₅ by substituting the cysteine residues at positions 146 and/or 160 of SEQ ID NO.: 4 with amino acids such as serine which cause a disruption of the disulfide bridge. The substitution of cysteine residues at positions 146 and 160 of SEQ ID NO.: 4 disrupts neuropilin-1 binding but does not disrupt heparin binding. Mutations at positions 146 and/or 160 can be coupled with one or more mutations to increase, maintain or restore receptor binding affinity to KDR, Flt-1 and/or VEGFR3 as described herein.

Similarly, the present invention includes VEGF analogs which exhibit decreased receptor binding affinity to neuropilin-2 compared to wild-type VEGF. For instance, the invention includes VEGF-C and VEGF-D analogs which exhibit reduced binding affinity to neuropilin-2 but increased or similar binding affinity to KDR and/or VEGFR3 compared to wild-type VEGF-C or VEGF-D, respectively.

The invention also includes VEGF analogs which exhibit enhanced stability and resistance to proteases. In one embodiment, amino acids substitutions at positions A111 and A148 of SEQ ID NO.: 4 are incorporated in a VEGF-A analog to improve resistance to proteases. The invention also includes VEGF-C and VEGF-D analogs which contain mutations preventing the cleavage of the VEGF-C propeptide or VEGF-D propeptide, respectively. For instance, the present invention includes VEGF-C and VEGF-D analogs that contain one or more mutations which induce resistance to serine protease plasmin and/or other members of the plasminogen family.

In another embodiment of the invention, VEGF analogs 40 which exhibit increased receptor binding affinity to one or more VEGF receptors, preferably KDR, can be created in a naturally occurring VEGF molecule which exhibits antagonistic properties. For instance, VEGF₁₆₅b, an isoform isolated from kidney tissue, can be modified to incorporate the amino acid substitutions associated with an increase in receptor binding ability and decrease in bioactivity of the protein. Similarly, a skilled artisan could incorporate the amino acid substitutions of the present invention in synthetic or new isoforms of VEGF which contain the properties of VEGF₁₆₅b. In particular, the mutations of the invention can be used with other VEGF proteins which contain the amino acids SLTRKD (SEQ ID NO.: 70), i.e., the amino acids coded for by what has been termed exon 9, in addition to or in place of the amino acids coded for by exon 8 (CDKPRR; SEQ ID NO.: 71).

Amino Acid Substitutions

The VEGF analogs of the present invention contain one or more basic amino acid substitutions which confer enhanced receptor binding affinity and decreased bioactivity. In one embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analogs are VEGF receptor antagonists, including but not limited to VEGF-A antagonists.

A modified VEGF molecule of the invention may have a basic amino acid substitution in one or more subunits, i.e., monomers, of VEGF. Basic amino acids comprise the amino acids lysine (K), arginine (R) and histidine (H), and any other basic amino acids which may be a modification of any of these three amino acids, synthetic basic amino acids not nor-

mally found in nature, or any other amino acids which are positively charged at a neutral pH. Preferred amino acids, among others, are selected from the group consisting of lysine and arginine.

In one embodiment, a modified VEGF molecule of the invention comprises at least one modified subunit, wherein the modified subunit comprises a basic amino acid substitution at position I83 of wild-type human VEGF₁₆₅ (SEQ ID NO.: 4), VEGF₁₂₁ (SEQ ID NO.: 6), VEGF₁₄₅ (SEQ ID NO.: 8), VEGF₁₄₈ (SEQ ID NO.: 10), VEGF₁₆₅b (SEQ ID NO.: 13), VEGF₁₈₃ (SEQ ID NO.: 15), VEGF₁₈₉ (SEQ ID NO.: 17) or VEGF₂₀₆ (SEQ ID NO.: 19). For instance, the invention includes an I83K amino acid substitution in SEQ ID NOs.: 4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, 17 or 19 corresponding to the amino acid sequences of VEGF-A isoforms.

The invention also includes a basic amino acid substitution in the position corresponding to position 83 in other VEGF molecules, i.e., VEGF-B, VEGF-C, VEGF-D and PIGF, such as position I83 of VEGF-B $_{167}$ (SEQ ID NO.: 48) or VEGF- $_{20}$ B $_{186}$ (SEQ ID NO.: 50) and position 191 of PIGF-1 (SEQ ID NO.: 54), PIGF-2 (SEQ ID NO.: 56) or PIGF-3 (SEQ ID NO.: 58).

The invention includes modified VEGF molecules in animals other than humans, wherein the VEGF molecule contains, in one or more subunits, a basic amino acid substitution in the position corresponding to position 83 in human VEGF-A. In one embodiment, the modified animal VEGF is a modified VEGF-A molecule. For instance, the present invention includes a basic amino acid substitution at position I83 in 30 primate (SEQ ID NO.: 22), position I82 in bovine (SEQ ID NO.: 25), position I82 in canine (SEQ ID NO.: 28), position I83 in chicken (SEQ ID NO.: 31), position I82 in equine (SEQ ID NO.: 182), position I82 in murine (SEQ ID NO.: 37), position I82 in porcine (SEQ ID NO.: 40), position I82 of rat 35 (SEQ ID NO.: 43) and position I82 in ovine (SEQ ID NO.: 46).

The invention also envisions a modified VEGF-related protein, including, but not limited to VEGF-E, VEGF-F and PDGF, containing an amino acid substitution corresponding 40 to position I83 of SEQ ID NO.: 4. For instance, VEGF-F (SEQ ID NO.: 62) can be modified to include an I83 amino acid substitution.

The modified VEGF molecule of the invention can contain basic amino acid substitutions which further increase the 45 binding affinity or decrease bioactivity of VEGF compared to wild-type VEGF such as wild-type VEGF-A. VEGF molecules with basic amino acid substitutions at one or more of positions 44, 67, 72, 73 and/or 87 of VEGF₁₆₅ (SEQ ID NO.: 4), VEGF₁₂₁ (SEQ ID NO.: 6), VEGF₁₄₅ (SEQ ID NO.: 8), 50 VEGF₁₄₈ (SEQ ID NO.: 10), VEGF₁₆₅b (SEQ ID NO.: 13), VEGF₁₈₃ (SEQ ID NO.: 15), VEGF₁₈₉ (SEQ ID NO.: 17) and VEGF₂₀₆ (SEQ ID NO.: 19) can increase binding affinity for KDR compared to wild-type VEGF. For instance, the invention includes the basic amino acid modifications E44R, 55 E44K, E72R, E72K, E73R, E73K, Q87R, Q87K and E67K.

In one embodiment of the invention, basic amino substitutions corresponding to positions 44, 67, 72, 73 and/or 87 of SEQ ID NO.: 4 are coupled with the basic amino acid substitution corresponding to position 83 of SEQ ID NO.: 4 to 60 produce a VEGF receptor antagonists. For instance, the modified amino acids of the present invention include basic amino acid substitutions at positions 72+73+83, 44+83, 72+83, 73+83, 44+72+83, 44+73+83, 44+72+73+83, 44+67+72+83, 67+72+83, 67+72+83, 67+72+83, 67+72+83, 44+67+72+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+73+83, 44+67+72+73+83, 44+67+73

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In another embodiment of the invention, the analog is a VEGF₁₆₅b molecule containing one or more basic amino acids at positions E44, E67, E72, E73 and Q87 and optionally a basic amino acid substitution at position I83. When the VEGF-A isoform is VEGF165b, it is possible to generate a VEGF analog of the invention with increased binding affinity and decreased bioactivity compared to wild-type VEGF-A, including VEGF₁₆₅, by incorporating a single amino acid modification that would otherwise only result in an increase in receptor binding affinity in other VEGF₁₆₅.

As can be appreciated by a skilled artisan, the invention includes VEGF proteins and VEGF-related proteins other that VEGF-A that contain basic amino acid modifications corresponding to those of positions E44, E67, E72, E73 and/or Q87 of VEGF-A (SEQ ID NO.: 4). For instance, the invention includes a modified VEGF-B analog (SEQ ID NOs.: 48 and 50) containing one or more basic amino acid substitutions at positions A44, E67, G72, Q73 and S87 and a modified VEGF-F analog (SEQ ID NO.: 62) containing one or more basic amino acid substitutions at positions E44, E67, E72, E73 and Q87.

A modified animal, i.e., non-human, VEGF-A molecule of the invention can likewise contain additional amino acid modifications to increase binding affinity or decrease bioactivity of the modified animal VEGF molecule compared to wild-type animal VEGF. The invention includes the use of these modifications in conjunction with an amino acid substitution that corresponds to I83 of SEQ ID NO.: 4 as described above. For instance, the present invention includes one or more basic amino acid substitutions selected from the group of positions E44, E67, E72, E73, I83 and I87 of primate (long-tailed macaque) VEGF-A (SEQ ID NO.: 22); one or more basic amino acid substitutions selected from the group of positions E43, E66, E71, E72, I82 and Q86 of bovine VEGF-A (SEQ ID NO.: 25); one or more basic amino acid substitutions selected from the group of positions E43, E66, E71, E72, I82 and Q86 of canine VEGF-A (SEQ ID NO.: 28); one or more basic amino acid substitutions selected from the group of positions E44, E67, D72, V73, I83 and Q87 of avian (chicken) VEGF-A (SEQ ID NO.: 31); one or more basic amino acid substitutions selected from the group of positions E43, E66, A71, E72, I82 and Q86 of equine VEGF-A (SEQ ID NO.: 34); one or more basic amino acid substitutions selected from the group of positions E43, E66, S71, E72, I82 and Q86 of murine VEGF-A (SEQ ID NO.: 37); one or more basic amino acid substitutions selected from the group of positions E43, E66, E71, E72, I82 and Q86 of porcine VEGF-A (SEQ ID No.: 40); one or more basic amino acid substitutions selected from the group of positions E43, E66, S71, E72, I82 and Q86 of rat VEGF-A (SEQ ID NO.: 43); and one or more basic amino acid substitutions selected from the group of positions E43, E66, E71, E72, I82 and Q86 of ovine VEGF-A (SEQ ID NO.: 46).

VEGF analogs containing one or more basic amino acid substitutions can also be combined with amino acid substitutions designed to disrupt a co-receptor binding site. In one embodiment, the VEGF analogs of the invention contain a disrupted neuropilin-1 binding site. The neuropilin-1 binding site comprises amino acids 111 to 165 of VEGF₁₆₅ (SEQ ID NO.: 04). This domain overlaps the heparin binding domain encoded by exons 6 and 7. The invention includes any amino acid modifications in or near (i.e., within about 5 amino acids) that disrupt the neuropilin-1 binding site domain but which do not disrupt the ability of the heparin binding domain to bind heparin sulfate. Such amino acid modifications can be determined empirically by a skilled artisan.

In one embodiment of the invention, the neuropilin-1 binding domain is disrupted by reducing the number of cysteine amino acid residues in the domain, i.e., by reducing the number of cysteine amino acid residues between amino acids 111 to 165 of VEGF-A. For instance, VEGF₁₆₅ analogs can be designed to disrupt the neuropilin 1 binding site by substituting the cysteine residues at positions 146 and/or 160 of SEQ ID NO.: 4 with amino acids such as serine which cause a disruption of the disulfide bridge. The substitution of cysteine residues at positions 146 and 160 of SEQ ID NO.: 4 disrupts neuropilin-1 binding but does not disrupt heparin binding. The neuropilin-1 binding site can also be disrupted by ending the amino acid peptide at position 146 or 160.

The invention can also included modifications of amino acids surrounding amino acids at positions 146 and 160 of SEQ ID NO.: 4 such that the cysteine residues of positions 146 and 160 are unable to form a disulfide bridge. For instance, the invention includes, but is not limited to, one or more amino acid substitutions at positions 136 through 165 20 which are capable of disrupting the formation of a disulfide bridge.

A modified VEGF analog of the invention containing one or more of the basic amino acid substitutions corresponding to E44, E67, E72, E73, I83 and Q87 of SEQ ID NO.: 4 described herein. For instance, the invention includes VEGF analogs with amino acid substitutions at positions E44B+ C146X, E44B+C160X, E44B+C146X+C160X, E67B+ C146X, E67B+C160X, E67B+C146X+C160X, E44B+ E67B+C146X, E44B+E67B+C160X, E44B+E67B+ 30 E72B+C146X, E72B+C160X, E72B+ C146X+C160X, C146X+C160X, E73B+C146X, E73B+C160X, E73B+ C146X+C160X, E72B+E73B+C146X, E72B+E73B+ C160X, E72B+E73B+C146X+C160X, I83B+C146X, I83B+C160X, I83B+C146X+C160X, Q87B+C146X, 35 O87B+C160X. Q87B+C146X+C160X, E44B+E67B+ E72B+C146X, E44B+E67B+E72B+C160X, E44B+E67B+ E72+C146X+C160X, E44B+E67B+E73B+C146X, E44B+ E67B+E73B+C160X, E44B+E67B+E73B+C146X+C160X, E44B+E67B+E72B+E73B+C146X, E44B+E67B+E72B+ 40 E73B+C160X, E44B+E67B+E72B+E73B+C146X+C160X, E67B+E72B+E73B+C146X, E67B+E72B+E73B+C160X, E67B+E72B+E73B+C146X+C160X, E44B+E72B+E73B+ C146X, E44B+E72B+E73B+C160X, E44B+E72B+E73B+ C146X+C160X, E44B+I83B+C146X, E44B+I83B+C160X, 45 E44B+I83B+C146X+C160X, E67B+I83B+C146X, E67B+ I83B+C160X, E67B+I83B+C146X+C160X, E44B+E67B+ I83B+C146X, E44B+E67B+I83B+C160X, E44B+E67B+ I83B+C146X+C160X, E72B+I83B+C146X, E72B+I83B+ C160X, E72B+I83B+C146X+C160X, E73B+I83B+C146X, 50 E73B+I83B+C160X, E73B+I83B+C146X+C160X, E72B+ E73B+I83B+C146X, E72B+E73B+I83B+C160X, E72B+ E73B+I83B+C146X+C160X, I83B+Q87B+C146X, I83B+ I83B+Q87B+C146X+C160X, Q87B+C160X, E44B+ E67B+E72B+I83B+C146X, E44B+E67B+E72B+I83B+ 55 C160X, E44B+E67B+E72+183B+C146X+C160X, E44B+ E67B+E73B+I83B+C146X, E44B+E67B+E73B+I83B+ C160X, E44B+E67B+E73B+I83B+C146X+C160X, E44B+ E67B+E72B+E73B+I83B+C146X, E44B+E67B+E72B+ E73B+I83B+C160X. E44B+E67B+E72B+E73B+I83B+ 60 C146X+C160X, E67B+E72B+E73B+I83B+C146X, E67B+ E72B+E73B+I83B+C160X, E67B+E72B+E73B+I83B+ C146X+C160X, E44B+E72B+E73B+I83B+C146X, E44B+ E72B+E73B+I83B+C160X and E44B+E72B+E73B+I83B+ C146X+C160X, wherein B is a basic amino acid and X is any amino acid other than cysteine. In one embodiment, X is serine.

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The modified proteins of the invention may also contain further substitutions, particularly conservative substitutions that do not alter the enhanced properties of the protein. Typically, however, such modified proteins will contain less than five substitutions at positions other than those listed above, and may exhibit complete amino acid sequence identity with the corresponding wild-type VEGF subunits in positions other that the positions listed above.

As can be appreciated by a skilled artisan, all amino acid substitutions and peptide modifications disclosed in the present invention can be incorporated in any VEGF protein or related protein, regardless of species, because of the high degree of homology between VEGF proteins and related proteins. A skilled artisan can correlate the amino acid substitutions described herein using methods known in the art, including, but not limited to, the use of amino acid sequence alignment software.

VEGF Analogs with Increased Serum Half-Life

The VEGF analogs of the invention may have an increased plasma half-life as compared to wild-type VEGF. In one embodiment, the modification(s) which increases or maintains receptor binding affinity and decreases bioactivity as compared to wild-type VEGF also increases the plasma half-life of the VEGF as compared to wild-type VEGF. In another embodiment, the modified VEGF proteins of the invention are further modified such that the plasma half-life is increased as compared to wild type VEGF.

There are many modifications known in the art that can be used to increase the half-life of proteins, in particular glycoproteins. For instance, the modified VEGF proteins of the invention may further comprise at least one sequence with a potential glycosylation site including sequences comprising N-glycosylation and/or O-glycosylation sites on either the alpha or beta chain. Sequences providing potential glycosylation recognition sites may be either an N-terminal or C-terminal extension on either subunit. Exemplary modified proteins contain an N-terminal extension on a subunit that is selected from the group consisting of ANITV (SEQ ID NO.: 72) and ANITVNITV (SEQ ID NO.: 73).

Increased half-life may also be provided by the use of a peptide extensions such as a carboxyl terminal extension peptide of hCG. See U.S. Ser. No. 09/519,728 which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety. A subunit of a VEGF analog may be covalently bound by any method known in the art to a CTEP, e.g., by a peptide bond or by a heterobifunctional reagent able to form a covalent bond between the amino terminus and carboxyl terminus of a protein, including but not limited to a peptide linker.

In another embodiment of the invention, the basic amino acid substitutions of the invention are coupled with one or more amino acid substitutions that enhance stability and increase serum half-life by eliminating one or more proteolytic cleavage sites. In one embodiment, the additional amino acid substitutions reduce proteolytic cleavage. In another embodiment, the additional amino acid substitutions prevent proteolytic cleavage. The invention includes VEGF analogs that contain one or more mutations which induce resistance to plasmin and other members of the plasminogen family. In one embodiment of the invention, at least one subunit of a VEGF molecule contains an amino acid substitution corresponding to amino acid positions A111 and/or A148 such as A111P and/or A148P of VEGF₁₆₅ (SEQ ID NO.: 4) or VEGF165b (SEQ ID NO.: 13). For instance, the invention includes VEGF₁₂₁, VEGF₁₄₅, VEGF₁₄₈, VEGF₁₈₃, VEGF₁₈₉ and VEGF₂₀₆ containing an amino acid substitution at position A111. The invention includes one or more mutations in VEGF-B, VEGF-C, VEGF-D and PIGF which inhibit

or reduce protease cleavage. For instance, the invention includes amino acid substitutions which prevent the cleavage of VEGF-C and VEGF-D necessary for bioactivity.

In another embodiment, half-life can be increased by linking VEGF monomers and by constructing fusion proteins. 5 Increasing the size of a VEGF analog without interfering with binding sites can increase the half-life of the molecule.

Increased half-life may be provided by crosslinking, including but not limited to pegylation or conjugation of other appropriate chemical groups. Such methods are known in the 10 art, for instance as described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,612,034, U.S. Pat. No. 6,225,449, and U.S. Pat. No. 6,555,660, each of which is incorporated by reference in its entirety. Half-life may also be increased by increasing the number of negatively charged residues within the molecule, for instance, the number of glutamate and/or aspartate residues. Such alteration may be accomplished by site directed mutagenesis or by an insertion of an amino acid sequence containing one or more negatively charged residues into said modified VEGF, including insertions selected from the group consisting of GEFT 20 and GEFTT, among others.

The half-life of a protein is a measurement of protein stability and indicates the time necessary for a one-half reduction in the concentration of the protein. The serum half-life of the modified VEGF molecules described herein may be determined by any method suitable for measuring VEGF levels in samples from a subject over time, for example, but not limited to, immunoassays using anti-VEGF antibodies to measure VEGF levels in serum samples taken over a period of time after administration of the modified VEGF, or by detection of 30 labeled VEGF molecules, i.e., radiolabeled molecules, in samples taken from a subject after administration of the labeled VEGF.

The rate of absorption of a VEGF analog of the present invention may result in increased or decreased duration of 35 action. A VEGF analog with an increased rate of absorption and decreased duration of action may be beneficial for patients receiving a VEGF analog pharmaceutical composition by way of subcutaneous administration or other route of administration generally associated with a slow rate of 40 absorption and/or increased duration of action by counteracting the absorption qualities associated with the route of administration.

Linker

The VEGF analog of the invention can contain two or more 45 monomers separated by a linker peptide. A linker peptide can be used to form a VEGF analog in a single chain conformation. A skilled artisan can appreciate that various types of linkers can be used in the present invention to form a VEGF single chain molecule that is capable of binding a VEGF 50 receptor and which acts as a VEGF receptor antagonist. A linker peptide should not hinder the ability of the single chain molecule to bind a VEGF receptor.

The linker peptide can range from about 2 to about 50 or more amino acids in length. For instance, the linker can 55 consist of about 2 amino acids, about 3 amino acids, about 4 amino acids, about 5 amino acids, about 6 amino acids, about 7 amino acids, about 8 amino acids, about 9 amino acids, about 10 amino acids, about 10-15 amino acids, or about 15-20 amino acids. In one embodiment of the invention, the 60 linker is Gly-Ser or contains Gly-Ser. In another embodiment, the linker is a glycine-rich polypeptide chain.

VEGF molecules containing a linker can be constructed using the methods described herein. A skilled artisan would be able to appreciate that VEGF analog molecules of the invention containing linker peptides can include any of the mutations described herein, in one or more monomers. Fur-

ther, a VEGF analog containing one or more linker peptides can link more than one type of VEGF protein or isoform. For instance, the present invention includes, but is not limited to, a modified VEGF single chain molecule with a wild-type VEGF $_{\rm 165}$ monomer linked to a modified VEGF $_{\rm 165}$ monomer containing an I83B substitution; a wild-type VEGF $_{\rm 165}$ monomer linked to a modified VEGF $_{\rm 165}$ b containing an I83B substitution; and a modified VEGF $_{\rm 165}$ monomer fused to a modified VEGF-F monomer.

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VEGF Fusion Proteins

The present invention also includes fusion proteins, i.e., chimeras, containing one or more modified VEGF proteins or fragments. "Fusion protein" and "chimera" are used interchangeably herein. As used herein, a VEGF moiety is a VEGF protein or protein fragment containing one or more of the basic amino acid substitutions of the invention. A VEGF fusion protein can have one or more VEGF moieties.

Such a fusion protein may be made by ligating the appropriate nucleic acid sequences encoding the desired amino acid sequences to each other by methods known in the art, in the proper coding frame, and expressing the fusion protein by any of the means described herein. Alternatively, such a fusion protein may be made by protein synthesis techniques, for example, using a peptide synthesizer.

The fusion protein of the invention contains at least one VEGF protein or protein fragment containing one or more basic amino acid substitutions described herein. In one embodiment the fusion protein contains a basic amino acid substitution at position I83 of VEGF₁₆₅ (SEQ ID NO. 4), VEGF₁₆₅b (SEQ ID NO. 13), VEGF₁₂₁ (SEQ ID NO.: 6), VEGF₁₄₈ (SEQ ID NO.: 8), VEGF₁₄₈ (SEQ ID NO.: 10), VEGF₁₈₃ (SEQ ID NO.: 15), VEGF₁₈₉ (SEQ ID NO.: 17) or VEGF₂₀₆ (SEQ ID NO.: 19). In another embodiment, the fusion protein contains at least one basic amino acid substitution at a position corresponding to I83K of SEQ ID NO.: 4 in another VEGF protein, for instance, an isoform of VEGF-B, VEGF-C, VEGF-D or PIGF. As can be appreciated by a skilled artisan, human or animal VEGF proteins or fragments thereof may be used for the fusion proteins of the invention.

In one embodiment of the invention, two different VEGF protein subunits or fragments thereof are fused. For instance, the invention includes a VEGF-A subunit or fragment thereof fused to a VEGF-B subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF-C subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF-D subunit or fragment thereof, or a PIGF subunit or fragment thereof; a VEGF-B subunit or fragment thereof fused to a VEGF-A subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF-C subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF-D subunit or fragment thereof, or a PIGF subunit or fragment thereof; a VEGF-C subunit or fragment thereof fused to a VEGF-A subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF-B subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF-D subunit or fragment thereof, or a PIGF subunit or fragment thereof; a VEGF-D subunit or fragment thereof fused to a VEGF-A subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF-B subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF-C subunit or fragment thereof, or a PIGF subunit or fragment thereof, and a PIGF subunit or fragment thereof fused to a VEGF-A subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF-B subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF-C subunit or fragment thereof, or a VEGF-D subunit or fragment thereof.

The invention includes fusion proteins comprised of two or more different isoforms of the same VEGF protein or fragments thereof. For instance, the invention includes a fusion protein comprised of a VEGF $_{165}$ subunit or fragment thereof fused to a VEGF $_{121}$ subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF $_{148}$ subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF $_{165}$ b subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF $_{183}$ subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF $_{189}$ subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF $_{189}$ subunit or fragment thereof.

The invention also includes a VEGF $_{165}$ b subunit or fragment thereof fused to a VEGF $_{121}$ subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF $_{148}$ subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF $_{148}$ subunit or fragment or subunit thereof, a VEGF $_{165}$ subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF $_{183}$ subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF $_{189}$ subunit or fragment thereof, a VEGF $_{189}$ subunit or fragment thereof.

The basic amino acid substitutions of the invention may be present in one or more subunits of the protein. For example, a fusion protein containing a VEGF $_{165}$ subunit and VEGF $_{165}$ subunit may only contain an amino acid substitution in the VEGF $_{165}$ subunit. The invention includes a wild-type VEGF $_{165}$ subunit fused by way of a GS linker to a VEGF $_{165}$ containing an 183K amino acid substitution. As can be appreciated by one of skill in the art, the fusion proteins of the present invention containing one mutated subunit can be created in both orientations, i.e., the subunit containing the mutation can be at either the N- or C-terminus of the fusion protein.

In another embodiment of the invention, a VEGF subunit or 20 fragment thereof is fused to a related protein subunit or fragment thereof. For instance, a VEGF subunit or fragment thereof can be fused to a PDGF subunit or other glycoprotein subunit or fragment thereof.

As can be appreciated by one of ordinary skill in the art, the 25 fusion proteins described herein can be constructed using human or animal VEGF sequences. Further, a fusion protein can be constructed using a human VEGF subunit fused to an animal VEGF subunit.

A VEGF fusion protein should be understood to be a VEGF 30 analog. All modifications disclosed herein, for instance, modifications to further increase receptor binding affinity, modifications to increase half-life and stability, modifications to reduce or inhibit protease cleavage, and modifications to disrupt a co-receptor binding site such as a neuropilin-1 binding site can be incorporated in one or more subunits of the VEGF fusion protein.

The fusion proteins of the invention can also contain a linker separating the two or more VEGF subunits or VEGF-related protein subunits. The linker can be covalently linked 40 to and between the peptides of the fusion protein.

VEGF and Toxin Fusion Proteins

The present invention provides fusion proteins comprising a toxin and one or more modified VEGF subunits, i.e., monomers, containing one or more of the basic amino acid substitutions described herein. For instance, the VEGF monomer, i.e., subunit, of a VEGF-toxin fusion protein can contain a basic amino acid at one or more amino acid positions corresponding to the amino acid positions from the group consisting of 44, 67, 72, 73, 83 and 87 (SEQ ID NO.: 4 or SEQ ID 50 NO.: 13). The VEGF and toxin fusion proteins of the invention may optionally contain a linker sequence separating the toxin and one or more VEGF subunits.

As used herein, the term "toxin" refers to a poisonous substance of biological origin. The toxin of the invention may 55 be a soluble toxin as known in the art. The fusion proteins comprising a soluble toxin may be used to target tumors. Such fusion proteins may also be used for diagnostic purposes.

Examples of toxins include, but are not limited to, *Pseudomonas* exotoxins (PE), Diphtheria toxins (DT), ricin 60 toxin, abrin toxin, anthrax toxins, shiga toxin, botulism toxin, tetanus toxin, cholera toxin, maitotoxin, palytoxin, ciguatoxin, textilotoxin, batrachotoxin, alpha conotoxin, taipoxin, tetrodotoxin, alpha tityustoxin, saxitoxin, anatoxin, microcystin, aconitine, exfoliatin toxins A and B, enterotoxins, 65 toxic shock syndrome toxin (TSST-1), *Y. pestis* toxin, gas gangrene toxin, and others.

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In one embodiment, the present invention provides a pharmaceutical composition comprising a soluble toxin fused to a modified VEGF and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier. In another embodiment, the present invention provides the use of a modified VEGF fusion protein comprising a soluble toxin for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment or prevention of diseases or conditions associated with angiogenesis.

Without wishing to be bound by a theory, it is believed that the VEGF-toxin fusion protein of the invention prevents or reduces angiogenesis, the growth of tumors and/or the spread of cancer by targeting and killing the VEGF receptor and surrounding endothelial and tumor cells.

Expression and/or Synthesis of VEGF Receptor Antagonists

The present invention includes nucleic acids encoding the modified VEGF proteins of the invention, as well as vectors and host cells for expressing the nucleic acids.

As used herein, the terms "nucleic acid" or "polynucleotide" refer to deoxyribonucleotides or ribonucleotides and polymers thereof in either single or double stranded form. The invention includes a nucleic acid molecule which codes for a modified VEGF molecule of the invention. For instance, the invention includes a nucleic acid molecule that codes for a modified VEGF $_{165}$ molecule. The nucleic acid molecule of SEQ ID NO.: 1 which codes for wild-type VEGF $_{165}$ can be mutated by methods known in the art such that the mutated VEGF $_{165}$ nucleic acid molecule codes for the modified protein. Similarly, the nucleic acid molecule of SEQ ID NO.: 11 which codes for wild-type VEGF $_{165}$ b can be mutated by methods known in the art such that it codes for a VEGF $_{165}$ b molecule of the invention.

Once a nucleic acid encoding a particular modified VEGF of interest, or a region of that nucleic acid encoding a portion of the protein containing a basic amino acid substitution, is constructed, modified, or isolated, that nucleic acid can then be cloned into an appropriate vector, which can direct the in vivo or in vitro synthesis of the modified VEGF protein. Alternatively, the nucleic acid encoding a VEGF analog of the invention may be cloned or modified directly in the expression vector of interest. The vector is contemplated to have the necessary functional elements that direct and regulate transcription of the inserted gene, or hybrid gene. These functional elements include, but are not limited to, a promoter, regions upstream or downstream of the promoter, such as enhancers that may regulate the transcriptional activity of the promoter, an origin of replication, appropriate restriction sites to facilitate cloning of inserts adjacent to the promoter, antibiotic resistance genes or other markers which can serve to select for cells containing the vector or the vector containing the insert, RNA splice junctions, a transcription termination region, or any other region which may serve to facilitate the expression of the inserted gene or hybrid gene. (See generally, Sambrook et al., Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual, 2nd ed. (1989)). Appropriate promoters for the expression of nucleic acids in different host cells are well known in the art, and are readily interchanged depending on the vector-host system used for expression. Exemplary vectors and host cells are described in U.S. Pat. No. 6,361,992, which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

There are numerous *E. coli* (*Escherichia coli*) expression vectors known to one of ordinary skill in the art which are useful for the expression of the nucleic acid insert. Other vectors suitable for use include expression vectors from bacilli, such as *Bacillus subtilis*, and other enterobacteriaceae, such as *Salmonella*, *Serratia*, and various *Pseudomonas* species. These expression vectors will typically contain

expression control sequences compatible with the host cell (e.g., an origin of replication). In addition, any number of a variety of well-known promoters will be present, such as the lactose promoter system, a tryptophan (Trp) promoter system, a beta-lactamase promoter system, or a promoter system from phage lambda. The promoters will typically control expression, optionally with an operator sequence, and have ribosome binding site sequences for example, for initiating and completing transcription and translation. If necessary, an amino terminal methionine can be provided by insertion of a 10 Met codon 5' and in-frame with the downstream nucleic acid insert. Also, the carboxy-terminal extension of the nucleic acid insert can be removed using standard oligonucleotide mutagenesis procedures.

Additionally, yeast expression systems can be used. There 15 are several advantages to yeast expression systems. First, evidence exists that proteins produced in a yeast secretion systems exhibit correct disulfide pairing. Second, post-translational glycosylation is efficiently carried out by yeast secretory systems. The Saccharomyces cerevisiae pre-pro-alpha- 20 factor leader region (encoded by the MF"-1 gene) is routinely used to direct protein secretion from yeast. (Brake, et al., "varies-Factor-Directed Synthesis and Secretion of Mature Foreign Proteins in Saccharomyces cerevisiae." Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci., 81:4642-4646 (1984)). The leader region of pre- 25 pro-alpha-factor contains a signal peptide and a pro-segment which includes a recognition sequence for a yeast protease encoded by the KEX2 gene. This enzyme cleaves the precursor protein on the carboxyl side of a Lys-Arg dipeptide cleavage signal sequence. The VEGF coding sequence can be 30 fused in-frame to the pre-pro-alpha-factor leader region. This construct is then put under the control of a strong transcription promoter, such as the alcohol dehydrogenase I promoter or a glycolytic promoter. The nucleic acid coding sequence is followed by a translation termination codon which is fol- 35 lowed by transcription termination signals. Alternatively, the nucleic acid coding sequences can be fused to a second protein coding sequence, such as Sj26 or beta-galactosidase, which may be used to facilitate purification of the fusion protein by affinity chromatography. The insertion of protease 40 cleavage sites to separate the components of the fusion protein is applicable to constructs used for expression in yeast. Efficient post-translational glycosolation and expression of recombinant proteins can also be achieved in Baculovirus systems.

Mammalian cells permit the expression of proteins in an environment that favors important post-translational modifications such as folding and cysteine pairing, addition of complex carbohydrate structures, and secretion of active protein. Vectors useful for the expression of active proteins in mammalian cells are characterized by insertion of the protein coding sequence between a strong viral or other promoter and a polyadenylation signal. The vectors can contain genes conferring hygromycin resistance, gentamicin resistance, or other genes or phenotypes suitable for use as selectable mark- 55 ers, or methotrexate resistance for gene amplification. The chimeric protein coding sequence can be introduced into a Chinese hamster ovary (CHO) cell line using a methotrexate resistance-encoding vector, or other cell lines using suitable selection markers. Presence of the vector DNA in trans- 60 formed cells can be confirmed by Southern blot analysis. Production of RNA corresponding to the insert coding sequence can be confirmed by Northern blot analysis. A number of other suitable host cell lines capable of secreting intact human proteins have been developed in the art, and include 65 the CHO cell lines, HeLa cells, myeloma cell lines, Jurkat cells, etc. Expression vectors for these cells can include

expression control sequences, such as an origin of replication, a promoter, an enhancer, and necessary information processing sites, such as ribosome binding sites, RNA splice sites, polyadenylation sites, and transcriptional terminator sequences. Exemplary expression control sequences are promoters derived from immunoglobulin genes, SV40, Adenovirus, Bovine Papilloma Virus, etc. The vectors containing the nucleic acid segments of interest can be transferred into the host cell by well-known methods, which vary depending on the type of cellular host. For example, calcium chloride transformation is commonly utilized for prokaryotic cells, whereas calcium phosphate, DEAE dextran, or lipofectin mediated transfection or electroporation may be used for other cellular hosts.

Expression of the gene or hybrid gene can be either in vivo or in vitro. In vivo synthesis comprises transforming prokaryotic or eukaryotic cells that can serve as host cells for the vector. For instance, techniques for transforming fungi are well known in the literature, and have been described, for instance, by Beggs (ibid.), Hinnen et al. (Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 75: 1929-1933, 1978), Yelton et al., (Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 81: 1740-1747, 1984), and Russell (Nature 301: 167-169, 1983). Other techniques for introducing cloned DNA sequences into fungal cells, such as electroporation (Becker and Guarente, Methods in Enzymol. 194: 182-187, 1991) may be used. The genotype of the host cell will generally contain a genetic defect that is complemented by the selectable marker present on the expression vector. Choice of a particular host and selectable marker is well within the level of ordinary skill in the art.

Cloned DNA sequences comprising modified VEGF and VEGF fusion proteins of the invention may be introduced into cultured mammalian cells by, for example, calcium phosphate-mediated transfection (Wigler et al., Cell 14: 725, 1978; Corsaro and Pearson, Somatic Cell Genetics 7: 603, 1981; Graham and Van der Eb, Virology 52: 456, 1973.) Other techniques for introducing cloned DNA sequences into mammalian cells, such as electroporation (Neumann et al., EMBO J. 1: 841-845, 1982), or lipofection may also be used. In order to identify cells that have integrated the cloned DNA, a selectable marker is generally introduced into the cells along with the gene or cDNA of interest. Preferred selectable markers for use in cultured mammalian cells include genes that confer resistance to drugs, such as neomycin, hygromycin, and methotrexate. The selectable marker may be an amplifiable selectable marker. A preferred amplifiable selectable marker is the DHFR gene. A particularly preferred amplifiable marker is the DHFR' (see U.S. Pat. No. 6,291,212) cDNA (Simonsen and Levinson, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 80: 2495-2499, 1983). Selectable markers are reviewed by Thilly (Mammalian Cell Technology, Butterworth Publishers, Stoneham, Mass.) and the choice of selectable markers is well within the level of ordinary skill in the art.

Alternatively, expression of the gene can occur in an in vitro expression system. For example, in vitro transcription systems are commercially available which are routinely used to synthesize relatively large amounts of mRNA. In such in vitro transcription systems, the nucleic acid encoding the modified VEGF would be cloned into an expression vector adjacent to a transcription promoter. For example, the Bluescript II cloning and expression vectors contain multiple cloning sites which are flanked by strong prokaryotic transcription promoters. (Stratagene Cloning Systems, La Jolla, Calif.). Kits are available which contain all the necessary reagents for in vitro synthesis of an RNA from a DNA template such as the Bluescript vectors. (Stratagene Cloning Systems, La Jolla, Calif.). RNA produced in vitro by a system

such as this can then be translated in vitro to produce the desired VEGF analog (Stratagene Cloning Systems, La Jolla, Calif.).

Another method of producing a VEGF receptor antagonist is to link two peptides or polypeptides together by protein chemistry techniques. Peptides or polypeptides can be chemically synthesized using currently available laboratory equipment using either Fmoc (9-fluorenylmethyloxycarbonyl) or Boc (tert-butyloxycarbonoyl) chemistry. (Applied Biosystems, Inc., Foster City, Calif.). One skilled in the art can readily appreciate that a peptide or polypeptide corresponding to a hybrid VEGF protein can be synthesized by standard chemical reactions. For example, a peptide or polypeptide can be synthesized and not cleaved from its synthesis resin whereas the other fragment of a hybrid peptide can be synthesized and subsequently cleaved from the resin, thereby exposing a terminal group which is functionally blocked on the other fragment. By peptide condensation reactions, these two fragments can be covalently joined via a peptide bond at 20 their carboxyl and amino termini, respectively, to form a hybrid peptide. (Grant, G. A., "Synthetic Peptides: A User Guide," W. H. Freeman and Co., N.Y. (1992) and Bodansky, M. and Trost, B., Ed., "Principles of Peptide Synthesis," Springer-Verlag Inc., N.Y. (1993)). Alternatively, the peptide 25 or polypeptide can by independently synthesized in vivo as described above. Once isolated, these independent peptides or polypeptides may be linked to form a VEGF via similar peptide condensation reactions. For example, enzymatic or chemical ligation of cloned or synthetic peptide segments can allow relatively short peptide fragments to be joined to produce larger peptide fragments, polypeptides or whole protein domains (Abrahmsen, L., et al., Biochemistry, 30:4151 (1991); Dawson, at al., "Synthesis of Proteins by Native 35 Chemical Ligation," Science, 266:776-779 (1994)).

The invention also provides fragments of modified VEGF which have antagonist activity. The polypeptide fragments of the present invention can be recombinant proteins obtained by cloning nucleic acids encoding the peptides in an expression system capable of producing the peptides. For example, amino or carboxy-terminal amino acids can be sequentially removed from either the native or the VEGF protein and the respective activity tested in one of many available assays described above. In another example, the modified proteins of 45 the invention may have a portion of either amino terminal or carboxy terminal amino acids, or even an internal region of the protein, replaced with a polypeptide fragment or other moiety, such as biotin, which can facilitate in the purification of the modified VEGF. For example, a modified VEGF can be 50 fused to a maltose binding protein, through either peptide chemistry of cloning the respective nucleic acids encoding the two polypeptide fragments into an expression vector such that the expression of the coding region results in a hybrid polypeptide. The hybrid polypeptide can be affinity purified 55 by passing it over an amylose affinity column, and the modified VEGF can then be separated from the maltose binding region by cleaving the hybrid polypeptide with the specific protease factor Xa. (See, for example, New England Biolabs Product Catalog, 1996, pg. 164).

The VEGF analog of the invention can be a heterodimer or a homodimer. In one embodiment, the VEGF analog is a fusion protein containing one or more VEGF subunits. The VEGF fusion protein of the invention can be a single chain protein containing two or more VEGF subunits separated by 65 linking peptides. In another embodiment, the VEGF analog of the invention is a fusion protein containing one or more VEGF

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subunits fused to a toxin. The VEGF analog and VEGF analog fusion protein of the invention can be isolated and purified by means known in the art.

All of the VEGF analogs of the invention contain at least one basic amino acid substitution in at least one VEGF subunit. In one embodiment of the invention, the VEGF analogs of the invention contain at least two basic amino acid substitutions, at least 3 basic amino acid substitutions, at least 4 basic amino acid substitutions or at least 5 basic amino acid substitutions in at least one or at least two VEGF subunits.

The invention includes VEGF analogs containing VEGF active fragments, i.e., peptides that are not full length proteins. Active fragments of the modified VEGF of the invention can also be synthesized directly or obtained by chemical or mechanical disruption of larger modified VEGF protein. An active fragment is defined as an amino acid sequence of at least about 5 consecutive amino acids, at least 10 consecutive amino acids, at least 20 consecutive amino acids, at least 30 consecutive amino acids, at least 40 consecutive amino acids, at least 50 consecutive amino acids, at least 60 consecutive amino acids, at least 70 consecutive amino acids, at least 80 consecutive amino acids, at least 90 consecutive amino acids, at least 100 consecutive amino acids, at least 110 consecutive amino acids, at least 120 consecutive amino acids, at least 130 consecutive amino acids, at least 140 consecutive amino acids, at least 150 consecutive amino acids, or at least 160 consecutive amino acids derived from the natural amino acid sequence, which has the relevant activity, e.g., binding or regulatory activity. The fragments, whether attached to other sequences or not, can also include insertions, deletions, substitutions, or other selected modifications of particular regions or specific amino acids residues, provided the activity of the peptide is not significantly altered or impaired compared to the modified VEGF. These modifications can provide for some additional property, such as to remove/add amino acids capable of disulfide bonding, to increase its biolongevity and/or bioactivity, etcetera. In any case, the peptide must possess a bioactive property, such as binding activity, regulation of binding at the binding domain, etcetera. Functional or active regions of the VEGF may be identified by mutagenesis of a specific region of the hormone, followed by expression and testing of the expressed polypeptide. Such methods are readily apparent to a skilled practitioner in the art and can include site-specific mutagenesis of the nucleic acid encoding the receptor (Zoller, M. J. et al.).

Methods of Use

The invention encompasses methods for reducing VEGF-mediated angiogenesis, comprising contacting a cell expressing kinase domain receptor (KDR) with the VEGF analogs, including VEGF- A_{165} and VEGF- A_{165} b analogs, described herein such that VEGF-mediated angiogenesis is reduced. KDR-expressing cells to be targeted by the methods of the invention can include either or both prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells. Such cells may be maintained in vitro, or they may be present in vivo, for instance in a patient or subject diagnosed with cancer or another angiogenesis-related disease.

The present invention includes methods of treating a patient diagnosed with an angiogenesis-related disease or condition with a therapeutically effective amount of any of the VEGF receptor antagonists described herein, comprising administering said VEGF analog or fusion protein to said patient such that said angiogenesis-related disease or condition is reduced or inhibited. In order to measure the reduction of angiogenesis, the patient's results may be compared to that of a patient administered a placebo. Exemplary angiogenesis-related diseases are described throughout this application, and include but are not limited to diseases selected from the

group consisting of tumors and neoplasias, hemangiomas, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, septic arthritis, asthma, atherosclerosis, idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, vascular restenosis, arteriovenous malformations, meningioma, neovascular glaucoma, psoriasis, Kaposi's Syndrome, angiofibroma, hemophilic joints, hypertrophic scars, Osler-Weber syndrome, pyogenic granuloma, retrolental fibroplasias, scleroderma, trachoma, von Hippel-Lindau disease, vascular adhesion pathologies, synovitis, dermatitis, endometriosis, pterygium, diabetic retinopathy, neovascularization associated with corneal injury or grafts, wounds, sores, and ulcers (skin, gastric and duodenal).

A patient suffering from a disease caused by or exacerbated by an increase in angiogenesis, a decrease in angiogenesis, or otherwise dysregulated angiogenesis can be treated with a 15 VEGF analog alone or in combination with a known VEGF receptor antagonist, an anti-angiogenesis therapy, an anticancer therapy, or other therapy known to treat the disease or condition. As used herein, "therapy" includes but is not limited to a known drug. Known VEGF receptor antagonists or 20 anti-angiogenesis therapies include but are not limited to agents that either interrupt VEGF/KDR interaction and/or block the KDR signal transduction pathway such as peptides that block binding of VEGF to KDR, antibodies to VEGF, antibodies to KDR, soluble receptors, tyrosine kinase inhibi- 25 tors, anti-VEGF immunotoxins, ribozymes, antisense mediated VEGF suppression, and undersulfated, low molecular weight glycol-split heparin.

If a VEGF analog of the invention is used in combination with another therapy, the coupling of the therapies results in a 30 synergistic effect. In addition, a VEGF analog of the present invention can be combined with a drug associated with an undesirable side effect. By coupling a VEGF analog with such a drug, the effective dosage of the drug with the side effect can be lowered to reduce the probability of the side 35 effect from occurring.

The invention includes methods of treating a patient diagnosed with cancer with a therapeutically effective amount of any of the VEGF receptor antagonists described herein, comprising administering said antagonist to said patient such that 40 the spread of said cancer is reduced or inhibited, i.e., metastasis is reduced or inhibited. The invention includes methods of treating a patient diagnosed with cancer with a therapeutically effective amount of any of the VEGF receptor antagonists described herein, comprising administering said antago- 45 nist to said patient such that the growth of a tumor is reduced or inhibited. In one embodiment, the VEGF analog functions by inhibiting angiogenesis by reducing or preventing VEGFinduced angiogenesis. In another embodiment, the VEGF analog is a VEGF-toxin fusion protein that prevents or 50 reduces angiogenesis by targeting or killing tumor cells, vascular cells such as endothelial cells and/or VEGF receptors.

Cancers treatable by the methods of the present invention include all solid tumor and metastatic cancers, including but not limited to those selected from the group consisting of 55 bladder, breast, liver, bone, kidney, colon, ovarian, prostate, pancreatic, lung, brain and skin cancers. The invention includes but is not limited to treatment of cancer with a VEGF analog of the present invention, alone, in combination with chemotherapy, or in combination with radiation therapy by 60 methods known in the art (see U.S. Pat. No. 6,596,712). For instance, a VEGF analog may be used with cesium, iridium, iodine, or cobalt radiation.

The present invention includes methods of treating a patient diagnosed with infertility with a therapeutically effective amount of any of the VEGF receptor antagonists described herein, comprising administering said antagonist to

said patient such that infertility is deemed treated by one of skill in the art. Infertility can be measured by quantitative and qualitative parameters known in the art such as quantity of oocytes, fertilization rate, blastocyst formation rate, and embryo formation rate. Such infertility diseases include any disease associated with the expression of VEGF that compromises a patient's fertility including but not limited to unexplained female infertility, endometriosis, and unexplained male infertility. The invention includes but is not limited to treatment of infertility by administration of a VEGF analog alone or in combination with other anti-VEGF treatments, anti-angiogenesis treatments, and/or infertility treatments.

The present invention also includes methods of treating a patient diagnosed with an angiogenesis-associated eye disease with a therapeutically effective amount of any of the VEGF receptor antagonists described herein, comprising administering said antagonist to said patient such that said eye disease is reduced or inhibited. Such eye diseases include any eye disease associated with abnormal intraocular neovascularization, including but not limited to retinopathy of prematurity, diabetic retinopathy, retinal vein occlusion, and agerelated macular degeneration. The invention includes but is not limited to treatment of angiogenesis-related eye diseases by administration of a VEGF analog alone or in combination with other anti-VEGF treatments, anti-angiogenesis treatments, and/or other eye disease treatments. For example, a VEGF analog of the present invention could be administered to a patient in conjunction with Pfizer's Macugen (pegaptanib) which is a pegylated anti-VEGF aptamer which acts by binding to and inhibiting the activity of VEGF for the treatment of diabetic macular edema, retinal vein occlusion, and age-related macular degeneration.

The present invention also includes methods of treating a patient diagnosed with an angiogenesis-associated inflammatory condition or autoimmune disease with a therapeutically effective amount of any of the VEGF receptor antagonists described herein, comprising administering said antagonist to said patient such that said inflammatory condition is reduced or inhibited. Such inflammatory conditions or diseases include any inflammatory disorder associated with expression of VEGF and activation of cells by VEGF, including but not limited to all types of arthritis and particularly rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis, asthma, pulmonary fibrosis and dermatitis. The invention includes but is not limited to treatment of angiogenesis-related inflammatory conditions or autoimmune disease by administration of a VEGF analog alone or in combination with other anti-VEGF treatments, anti-angiogenesis treatments, inflammation therapeutics, and/or autoimmune disease therapeutics.

In another embodiment of the present invention, the modified VEGF protein of the invention is used as a diagnostic. The VEGF analogs of the invention or VEGF receptors can displayed on a synthetic surface, such as in a protein or peptide array. Such an array is well known in the art and can be used to screen for VEGF analogs which bind to KDR and other receptors known to be involved in angiogenesis. The VEGF analogs disclosed herein can be used as positive controls to assess the ability of putative VEGF analogs to bind to KDR and other receptors known to be involved in angiogenesis. The invention also includes an array comprising the VEGF analogs of the present invention to screen for putative VEGF receptors which may be involved in angiogenesis.

Assays suitable for characterizing the analogs described herein are described in PCT/US/99/05908, which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety. For instance, various immunoassays may be used including but not limited to competitive binding assays and non-competitive assay systems

using techniques such as radioimmunoassays, ELISA, sandwich immunoassays, immunoradiometric assays, gel diffusion precipitin reactions, immunodiffusion assays, in situ immunoassays, western blots, precipitation reactions, agglutination assays, complement fixation assays, immunofluorescence assays, Protein A assays, and immunoelectrophoresis assays, etcetera.

Pharmaceutical Formulations

The invention provides methods of diagnosis and treatment by administration to a subject of an effective amount of a therapeutic of the invention. The subject may be an animal, including but not limited to animals such as cows, pigs, horses, chickens, cats, dogs, etc., and is preferably a mammal, and most preferably human. In a specific embodiment, a non-human mammal is the subject.

The pharmaceutical compositions of the invention comprise an effective amount of one or more modified VEGF proteins of the present invention in combination with the pharmaceutically acceptable carrier. The compositions may 20 further comprise other known drugs suitable for the treatment of the particular disease being targeted. An effective amount of the VEGF receptor antagonist of the present invention is that amount that blocks, inhibits or reduces VEGF stimulation of endothelial cells compared to that which would occur 25 in the absence of the compound; in other words, an amount that decreases the angiogenic activity of the endothelium, compared to that which would occur in the absence of the compound. The effective amount (and the manner of administration) will be determined on an individual basis and will 30 be based on the specific therapeutic VEGF receptor antagonist being used and a consideration of the subject (size, age, general health), the condition being treated (cancer, arthritis, eye disease, etc.), the severity of the symptoms to be treated, the result sought, the specific carrier or pharmaceutical for- 35 mulation being used, the route of administration, and other factors as would be apparent to those skilled in the art. The effective amount can be determined by one of ordinary skill in the art using techniques as are known in the art. Therapeutically effective amounts of the compounds described herein 40 can be determined using in vitro tests, animal models or other dose-response studies, as are known in the art. The VEGF proteins of the present invention can be used alone or in conjunction with other therapies. The therapeutically effective amount may be reduced when a VEGF analog is used in 45 conjunction with another therapy.

The pharmaceutical compositions of the invention may be prepared, packaged, or sold in formulations suitable for intradermal, intravenous, subcutaneous, oral, rectal, vaginal, parenteral, intraperitoneal, topical, pulmonary, intranasal, 50 buccal, ophthalmic, intrathecal, epidural or another route of administration. The compounds may be administered by any convenient route, for example by infusion or bolus injection, by absorption through epithelial or mucocutaneous linings (e.g., oral mucosa, rectal and intestinal mucosa, etc.) and may 55 be administered together with other biologically active agents. Administration can be systemic or local. For example, the pharmaceutical compositions of the invention can be administered locally to a tumor via microinfusion. Further, administration may be by a single dose or a series of doses. 60

For pharmaceutical uses, the VEGF analogs of the present invention may be used in combination with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, and can optionally include a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or excipient. Further, the VEGF analogs of the present invention may be used in combination 65 with other known therapies, including but not limited to anti-VEGF therapies, anti-angiogenesis therapies, anti-cancer

therapies, infertility therapies, autoimmune disease therapies, inflammation therapies, ocular disease therapies, and skin disease therapies.

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The present invention thus also provides pharmaceutical compositions suitable for administration to a subject. The carrier can be a liquid, so that the composition is adapted for parenteral administration, or can be solid, i.e., a tablet or pill formulated for oral administration. Further, the carrier can be in the form of a nebulizable liquid or solid so that the composition is adapted for inhalation. When administered parenterally, the composition should be pyrogen free and in an acceptable parenteral carrier. Active compounds can alternatively be formulated or encapsulated in liposomes, using known methods. Other contemplated formulations include projected nanoparticles and immunologically based formulations.

Liposomes are completely closed lipid bilayer membranes which contain entrapped aqueous volume. Liposomes are vesicles which may be unilamellar (single membrane) or multilamellar (onion-like structures characterized by multiple membrane bilayers, each separated from the next by an aqueous layer). The bilayer is composed of two lipid monolayers having a hydrophobic "tail" region and a hydrophobic "head" region. In the membrane bilayer, the hydrophobic (nonpolar) "tails" of the lipid monolayers orient toward the center of the bilayer, whereas the hydrophilic (polar) "heads" orient toward the aqueous phase.

The liposomes of the present invention may be formed by any of the methods known in the art. Several methods may be used to form the liposomes of the present invention. For example, multilamellar vesicles (MLVs), stable plurilamellar vesicles (SPLVs), small unilamellar vesicles (SUV), or reverse phase evaporation vesicles (REVs) may be used. Preferably, however, MLVs are extruded through filters forming large unilamellar vesicles (LUVs) of sizes dependent upon the filter size utilized. In general, polycarbonate filters of 30, 50, 60, 100, 200 or 800 nm pores may be used. In this method, disclosed in Cullis et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,008,050, relevant portions of which are incorporated by reference herein, the liposome suspension may be repeatedly passed through the extrusion device resulting in a population of liposomes of homogeneous size distribution.

For example, the filtering may be performed through a straight-through membrane filter (a Nuclepore polycarbonate filter) or a tortuous path filter (e.g. a Nuclepore Membrafil filter (mixed cellulose esters) of 0.1 µm size), or by alternative size reduction techniques such as homogenization. The size of the liposomes may vary from about 0.03 to above about 2 microns in diameter; preferably about 0.05 to 0.3 microns and most preferably about 0.1 to about 0.2 microns. The size range includes liposomes that are MLVs, SPLVs, or LUVs.

Lipids which can be used in the liposome formulations of the present invention include synthetic or natural phospholipids and may include phosphatidylcholine (PC), phosphatidylethanolamine (PE), phosphatidylserine (PS), phosphatidylglycerol (PG), phosphatidic acid phosphatidylinositol (PI), sphingomyelin (SPM) and cardiolipin, among others, either alone or in combination, and also in combination with cholesterol. The phospholipids useful in the present invention may also include dimyristoylphosphatidylcholine (DMPC) and dimyristoylphosphatidylglycerol (DMPG). In other embodiments, distearoylphosphatidylcholine (DSPC), dipalmitoylphosphatidylcholine (DPPC), or hydrogenated soy phosphatidylcholine (HSPC) may also be used. Dimyristoylphosphatidylcholine (DMPC) and diarachidonoylphosphatidylcholine (DAPC) may similarly be used.

During preparation of the liposomes, organic solvents may also be used to suspend the lipids. Suitable organic solvents for use in the present invention include those with a variety of polarities and dielectric properties, which solubilize the lipids, for example, chloroform, methanol, ethanol, dimethyl- 5 sulfoxide (DMSO), methylene chloride, and solvent mixtures such as benzene: methanol (70:30), among others. As a result, solutions (mixtures in which the lipids and other components are uniformly distributed throughout) containing the lipids are formed. Solvents are generally chosen on the basis of their 10 biocompatibility, low toxicity, and solubilization abilities.

To encapsulate the VEGF receptor antagonist(s) of the inventions into the liposomes, the methods described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,380,531, relevant portions of which are incorporated by reference herein, may be used with the analog(s) of 15 the present invention.

Liposomes containing the VEGF analog(s) of the present invention may be used therapeutically in mammals, especially humans, in the treatment of a number of disease states or pharmacological conditions which require sustained 20 release formulations as well as repeated administration. The mode of administration of the liposomes containing the agents of the present invention may determine the sites and cells in the organism to which the VEGF analog may be delivered.

The liposomes of the present invention may be administered alone but will generally be administered in admixture with a pharmaceutical carrier selected with regard to the intended route of administration and standard pharmaceutical practice. The preparations may be injected parenterally, for 30 example, intravenously. For parenteral administration, they can be used, for example, in the form of a sterile aqueous solution which may contain other solutes, for example, enough salts or glucose to make the solution isotonic, should isotonicity be necessary or desired. The liposomes of the 35 present invention may also be employed subcutaneously or intramuscularly. Other uses, depending upon the particular properties of the preparation, may be envisioned by those skilled in the art.

For the oral mode of administration, the liposomal formu- 40 lations of the present invention can be used in the form of tablets, capsules, lozenges, troches, powders, syrups, elixirs, aqueous solutions and suspensions, and the like. In the case of tablets, carriers which can be used include lactose, sodium citrate and salts of phosphoric acid. Various disintegrants 45 such as starch, lubricating agents, and talc are commonly used in tablets. For oral administration in capsule form, useful diluents are lactose and high molecular weight polyethylene glycols. When aqueous suspensions are required for oral use, the active ingredient is combined with emulsifying and sus- 50 pending agents. If desired, certain sweetening and/or flavoring agents can be added.

For the topical mode of administration, the pharmaceutical formulations of the present invention may be incorporated ointment or salve, and the like. Preparation of such topical formulations are described in the art of pharmaceutical formulations as exemplified, for example, by Gennaro et al. (1995) Remington's Pharmaceutical Sciences, Mack Publishing. For topical application, the compositions could also 60 be administered as a powder or spray, particularly in aerosol form. For administration to humans in the treatment of disease states or pharmacological conditions, the prescribing physician will ultimately determine the appropriate dosage of the agent for a given human subject, and this can be expected 65 to vary according to the age, weight and response of the individual as well as the pharmacokinetics of the agent used.

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The pharmaceutical compositions of the invention further comprise a depot formulation of biopolymers such as biodegradable microspheres. Biodegradable microspheres are used to control drug release rates and to target drugs to specific sites in the body, thereby optimizing their therapeutic response, decreasing toxic side effects, and eliminating the inconvenience of repeated injections. Biodegradable microspheres have the advantage over large polymer implants in that they do not require surgical procedures for implantation and removal.

The biodegradable microspheres used in the context of the invention are formed with a polymer which delays the release of the proteins and maintains, at the site of action, a therapeutically effective concentration for a prolonged period of time. The polymer can be chosen from ethylcellulose, polystyrene, poly(ε-caprolactone), poly(lactic acid) and poly(lactic acidco-glycolic acid) (PLGA). PLGA copolymer is one of the synthetic biodegradable and biocompatible polymers that has reproducible and slow-release characteristics. An advantage of PLGA copolymers is that their degradation rate ranges from months to years and is a function of the polymer molecular weight and the ratio of polylactic acid to polyglycolic acid residues. Several products using PLGA for parenteral applications are currently on the market, including Lupron Depot and Zoladex in the United States and Enantone Depot, Decapeptil, and Pariodel_LA in Europe (see Yonsei, Med J. 2000 December; 41(6):720-34 for review).

The pharmaceutical compositions of the invention may further be prepared, packaged, or sold in a formulation suitable for nasal administration as increased permeability has been shown through the tight junction of the nasal epithelium (Pietro and Woolley, The Science behind Nastech's intranasal drug delivery technology. Manufacturing Chemist, August, 2003). Such formulations may comprise dry particles which comprise the active ingredient and which have a diameter in the range from about 0.5 to about 7 nanometers, and preferably from about 1 to about 6 nanometers. Such compositions are conveniently in the form of dry powders for administration using a device comprising a dry powder reservoir to which a stream of propellant may be directed to disperse the powder or using a self-propelling solvent/powder-dispensing container such as a device comprising the active ingredient dissolved or suspended in a low-boiling propellant in a sealed container. Preferably, such powders comprise particles wherein at least 98% of the particles by weight have a diameter greater than 0.5 nanometers and at least 95% of the particles by number have a diameter less than 7 nanometers. More preferably, at least 95% of the particles by weight have a diameter greater than 1 nanometer and at least 90% of the particles by number have a diameter less than 6 nanometers. Dry powder compositions preferably include a solid fine powder diluent such as sugar and are conveniently provided in a unit dose form.

Pharmaceutical compositions of the invention formulated into dosage forms such as a solution, suspension, gel, oil, 55 for nasal delivery may also provide the active ingredient in the form of droplets of a solution or suspension. Such formulations may be prepared, packaged, or sold as aqueous or dilute alcoholic solutions or suspensions, optionally sterile, comprising the active ingredient, and may conveniently be administered using any nebulization or atomization device. Such formulations may further comprise one or more additional ingredients including, but not limited to, a flavoring agent such as saccharin sodium, a volatile oil, a buffering agent, a surface active agent, or a preservative such as methylhydroxybenzoate. The droplets provided by this route of administration preferably have an average diameter in the range from about 0.1 to about 200 nanometers.

Another formulation suitable for intranasal administration is a coarse powder comprising the active ingredient and having an average particle from about 0.2 to 500 micrometers. Such a formulation is administered in the manner in which snuff is taken i.e. by rapid inhalation through the nasal passage from a container of the powder held close to the nose.

Formulations suitable for nasal administration may, for example, comprise from about as little as 0.1% (w/w) and as much as 100% (w/w) of the active ingredient, and may further comprise one or more of the additional ingredients described 10 herein.

In some embodiments, the compositions of the invention may be administered by inhalation. For inhalation therapy, the active ingredients may be in a solution useful for administration by metered dose inhalers or in a form suitable for a 15 dry powder inhaler. In another embodiment, the compositions are suitable for administration by bronchial lavage.

Suitable formulations for oral administration include hard or soft gelatin capsules, pills, tablets, including coated tablets, elixirs, suspensions, syrups or inhalations and controlled 20 release forms thereof.

The VEGF receptor antagonists of the present invention can be administered acutely (i.e., during the onset or shortly after events leading to inflammation), or can be administered during the course of a degenerative disease to reduce or ameliorate the progression of symptoms that would otherwise occur. The timing and interval of administration is varied according to the subject's symptoms, and can be administered at an interval of several hours to several days, over a time course of hours, days, weeks or longer, as would be determined by one skilled in the art. A typical daily regime can be from about 0.01 μ g/kg body weight per day, from about 1 μ g/kg body weight per day, from about 100 μ g/kg body weight per day, and from about 1 μ g/kg body weight per day.

The VEGF receptor antagonists of the invention may be administered intravenously, orally, intranasally, intraocularly, intramuscularly, intrathecally, or by any suitable route in view of the VEGF protein, the protein formulation and the disease to be treated. Modified VEGF for the treatment of 40 inflammatory arthritis can be injected directly into the synovial fluid. Modified VEGF for the treatment of solid tumors may be injected directly into the tumor. Modified VEGF for the treatment of skin diseases may be applied topically, for instance in the form of a lotion or spray. Intrathecal adminis- 45 tration, i.e. for the treatment of brain tumors, can comprise injection directly in to the brain. Alternatively, modified VEGF may be coupled or conjugated to a second molecule (a "carrier"), which is a peptide or non-proteinaceous moiety selected for its ability to penetrate the blood-brain barrier and 50 transport the active agent across the blood-brain barrier. Examples of suitable carriers are disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,902,505; 5,604,198; and 5,017,566, which are herein incorporated by reference in their entirety.

An alternative method of administering the VEGF receptor 55 antagonists of the present invention is carried out by administering to the subject a vector carrying a nucleic acid sequence encoding the modified VEGF protein, where the vector is capable of directing expression and secretion of the protein. Suitable vectors are typically viral vectors, including 60 DNA viruses, RNA viruses, and retroviruses. Techniques for utilizing vector delivery systems and carrying out gene therapy are known in the art (see Lundstrom, 2003, Trends Biotechnol. 21(3):117-22, for a recent review).

Transgenic Animals

The production of transgenic non-human animals that contain a modified VEGF construct with increased receptor bind-

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ing affinity and optionally antagonistic properties is contemplated in one embodiment of the present invention.

The successful production of transgenic, non-human animals has been described in a number of patents and publications, such as, for example U.S. Pat. No. 6,291,740 (issued Sep. 18, 2001); U.S. Pat. No. 6,281,408 (issued Aug. 28, 2001); and U.S. Pat. No. 6,271,436 (issued Aug. 7, 2001) the contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference in their entireties.

The ability to alter the genetic make-up of animals, such as domesticated mammals including cows, pigs, goats, horses, cattle, and sheep, allows a number of commercial applications. These applications include the production of animals which express large quantities of exogenous proteins in an easily harvested form (e.g., expression into the milk or blood), the production of animals with increased weight gain, feed efficiency, carcass composition, milk production or content, disease resistance and resistance to infection by specific microorganisms and the production of animals having enhanced growth rates or reproductive performance. Animals which contain exogenous DNA sequences in their genome are referred to as transgenic animals.

The most widely used method for the production of transgenic animals is the microinjection of DNA into the pronuclei of fertilized embryos (Wall et al., J. Cell. Biochem. 49:113 [1992]). Other methods for the production of transgenic animals include the infection of embryos with retroviruses or with retroviral vectors. Infection of both pre- and post-implantation mouse embryos with either wild-type or recombinant retroviruses has been reported (Janenich, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 73:1260 [1976]; Janenich et al., Cell 24:519 [1981]; Stuhlmann et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 81:7151 [1984]; Jahner et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 82:6927 [1985]; Van der Putten et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 82:6148-6152 [1985]; Stewart et al., EMBO J. 6:383-388 [1987]).

An alternative means for infecting embryos with retroviruses is the injection of virus or virus-producing cells into the blastocoele of mouse embryos (Jahner, D. et al., Nature 298: 623 [1982]). The introduction of transgenes into the germline of mice has been reported using intrauterine retroviral infection of the midgestation mouse embryo (Jahner et al., supra [1982]). Infection of bovine and ovine embryos with retroviruses or retroviral vectors to create transgenic animals has been reported. These protocols involve the microinjection of retroviral particles or growth arrested (i.e., mitomycin C-treated) cells which shed retroviral particles into the perivitelline space of fertilized eggs or early embryos (PCT International Application WO 90/08832 [1990]; and Haskell and Bowen, Mol. Reprod. Dev., 40:386 [1995]. PCT International Application WO 90/08832 describes the injection of wildtype feline leukemia virus B into the perivitelline space of sheep embryos at the 2 to 8 cell stage. Fetuses derived from injected embryos were shown to contain multiple sites of

U.S. Pat. No. 6,291,740 (issued Sep. 18, 2001) describes the production of transgenic animals by the introduction of exogenous DNA into pre-maturation oocytes and mature, unfertilized oocytes (i.e., pre-fertilization oocytes) using retroviral vectors which transduce dividing cells (e.g., vectors derived from murine leukemia virus [MLV]). This patent also describes methods and compositions for cytomegalovirus promoter-driven, as well as mouse mammary tumor LTR expression of various recombinant proteins.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,281,408 (issued Aug. 28, 2001) describes methods for producing transgenic animals using embryonic stem cells. Briefly, the embryonic stem cells are used in a

mixed cell co-culture with a morula to generate transgenic animals. Foreign genetic material is introduced into the embryonic stem cells prior to co-culturing by, for example, electroporation, microinjection or retroviral delivery. ES cells transfected in this manner are selected for integrations of the 5 gene via a selection marker such as neomycin.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,271,436 (issued Aug. 7, 2001) describes the production of transgenic animals using methods including isolation of primordial germ cells, culturing these cells to produce primordial germ cell-derived cell lines, transforming 10 both the primordial germ cells and the cultured cell lines, and using these transformed cells and cell lines to generate transgenic animals. The efficiency at which transgenic animals are generated is greatly increased, thereby allowing the use of homologous recombination in producing transgenic non-ro- 15 to decrease cell proliferation compared to wild-type VEGF. dent animal species.

Kits Containing Modified VEGF Proteins

In a further embodiment, the present invention provides kits containing a VEGF analog and/or VEGF analog fusion proteins, which can be used, for instance, for therapeutic or 20 non-therapeutic applications. The kit comprises a container with a label. Suitable containers include, for example, bottles, vials, and test tubes. The containers may be formed from a variety of materials such as glass or plastic. The container holds a composition which includes a VEGF analog or VEGF 25 fusion protein that is effective for therapeutic or non-therapeutic applications, such as described above. The label on the container indicates that the composition is used for a specific therapy or non-therapeutic application, and may also indicate directions for either in vivo or in vitro use, such as those 30 described above.

The kit of the invention will typically comprise the container described above and one or more other containers comprising materials desirable from a commercial and user standpoint, including buffers, diluents, filters, needles, 35 syringes, and package inserts with instructions for use. The kit of the invention may also include a control consisting of wild-type VEGF such as wild-type VEGF₁₆₅ or VEGF₁₆₅b.

The following examples are provided to describe and illustrate the present invention. As such, they should not be construed to limit the scope of the invention. Those in the art will appreciate that many other embodiments also fall within the scope of the invention, as it is described herein above and in the claims.

EXAMPLES

Example 1

Design of VEGF Receptor Antagonists

VEGF-A antagonists of the present invention were designed to increase receptor binding affinity and decrease bioactivity as compared to wild-type VEGF-A. One method by which this was done was by adding a positive charge to the 55 loops of VEGF-A. This approach to design super-antagonists involves a combination of different methods known in the art including but not limited to homology modeling, sequence comparisons, charge scanning mutagenesis, and linking monomers and introduction of mutations in the context of 60 linked monomers.

Vammin, or snake venom VEGF, has been shown to bind to KDR-IgG with high affinity and strongly stimulate proliferation of vascular endothelial cells in vitro (see Yamazaki et al., 2003, J. Biol. Chem. 278, 51985-51988, which is herein 65 incorporated by reference in its entirety). VEGF-A receptor antagonists were designed based on VEGF₁₆₅ homology to

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vammin. $VEGF_{165}$ has glutamate residues at positions 72 and 73, whereas vammin contains a glycine and lysine residue at these positions, respectively. By modifying VEGF-A to contain two basic amino acid residues at positions 72 and 73, the modified VEGF-A demonstrated a significant increase in receptor binding affinity compared to wild-type VEGF-A (FIG. 3A).

Example 2

Characterization of VEGF Receptor Antagonists

VEGF analogs I83K, E44R, E72RE73R, E67K and Q87K were created and assayed for their ability to bind to KDR and Methods

VEGF analogs expressed by yeast cells were incubated with immobilized KDR-Fc and the ability of the analogs to bind to KDR-Fc was assayed. The binding assay was performed as follows:

- 1. Nunc MaxiSorp™ 96 microwell plates were coated with 150 ng/well KDR-Fc (R & D System, Inc.) and 100 µl 50 mM sodium bicarbonate buffer (15 mM Na₂CO₃+35 mM NaHCO₃) at pH 9.6. A separate plate was used for each VEGF analog and wild-type VEGF tested.
 - 2. The plates were incubated at 4° C. overnight.
- 3. The next day, the wells were washed three times in washing buffer (0.05% tween in PBS).
- 4. The wells were blocked with PBS with 3% BSA, 0.03% tween for 1 hour at room temperature.
- 5. After blocking, the wells were washed three times in washing buffer (0.05% tween in PBS).
- 6. VEGF-A (wild-type or mutant) were added at different concentrations to the wells in 50 µl binding buffer (1% BSA and 0.03% tween in PBS).
- 7. 125 I-labeled VEGF-A (wild-type or mutant) at 70,000 cpm/well (PerkinElmer) was added to each well in 50 μl binding buffer (1% BSA and 0.03% tween in PBS).
- 8. The contents of the wells were mixed and incubated for 2 hours at room temperature with slow shaking.
- 9. The wells were washed three times with washing buffer (0.05% tween in PBS).
- 10. To each well, 120 µl of lysis buffer (0.2 M NaOH+0.5% SDS) was added. Plate was shaken vigorously for 20 minutes 45 at room temperature.
 - 11. The lysis buffer from each well was transferred to an individual tube. The wells were washed with lysis buffer two times additional times and combined with the lysis solution buffer in the corresponding tube.
 - 12. The measure of binding for wild-type VEGF-A and various VEGF-A mutants was determined by counting with a gamma counter.

The ability of HUVEC endothelial cells to proliferate in the presence of the VEGF analogs was assayed as follows:

- 1. HUVEC endothelial cells (passage 6) were seeded into 96 well plates at 3,000 cells/well using Media-200 with growth factors and incubated overnight.
- 2. After overnight incubation, the media was removed and Media 199 (Invitrogen) with 2% dialysis FBS (Invitrogen) was added.
 - 3. Cells were incubated for 20 hours.
- 4. Wild-type VEGF-A and VEGF-A analogs were serial diluted in Media 199 with 2% dialysis FBS in the 96-well plates, starting at 200 ng/well.
- 5. The media was removed from each well and replaced with 200 µl/well diluted VEGF media.
 - 6. Cells were incubated at 37° C. for 72 hours.

7. Cell proliferation was analyzed using Promega's Cell-Titer-Glo® Luminescent Cell Viability Assay. Briefly, Cell-Titer buffer was thawed, transferred into CellTiter-Glo substrate, and mixed well to make substrate mixture. 100 μl growth media was removed from each well into a new 96 well plate and mixed well with 100 μl substrate mixture. The plates were shaken for 2 minutes and incubated at room temperature for an additional ten minutes.

8. Plates were read for luminescent signal using a plate reader with integration time set at 250 mS (Tecan).

Analysis

The receptor binding affinity of the I83K analog to KDR-Fc was slightly less than that of wild-type VEGF-A (FIG. 1A). However, the I83K analog demonstrated a significant decrease in endothelial cell proliferation compared to wild-type VEGF-A (FIG. 1B). VEGF-A analogs E44R, EE72/73RR, E67K and Q87K all demonstrated an increase in receptor cell binding affinity compared to wild-type VEGF-A

(FIGS. 2A, 3A, 4, 5 and 6). However, analogs E44R and EE72/73RR demonstrated little to no change in endothelial cell proliferation (FIGS. 2B and 3B). These results show that VEGF₁₆₅ analogs comprising I83K can effectively function as a VEGF-A receptor antagonist. Further, although VEGF-A analogs E44R and EE72/73RR were unable to decrease endothelial cell proliferation alone, when added to I83K, these modifications have the potential of further increasing receptor binding affinity.

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All publications, patents and patent applications discussed in this application are incorporated herein by reference. While in the foregoing specification this invention has been described in relation to certain preferred embodiments, thereof, and may details have been set forth for purposes of illustration, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the invention is susceptible to additional embodiments and that certain of the details described herein may be varied considerably without departing from the basic principles of the invention.

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Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu 50 \,
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90

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Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr
Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln
Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg 180 185 190
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Tyr Leu His His Ala Lys Trp Ser Gln Ala
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Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu
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Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu
Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile
Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe
Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg
Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser
Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys
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Gly Gly Gln Asn His His Glu Val Val Lys Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln
Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu
Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu
Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro
Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His
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Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu
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Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu
Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile
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Gln Glu Asn Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg
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Tyr Leu His His Ala Lys Trp Ser Gln Ala Ala Pro Met Ala Glu Gly
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Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu
Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu
Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro
Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His
Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys
Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg Gln Glu Lys Lys Ser Val
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Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu
Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile
Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe
Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg
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Tyr Leu His His Ala Lys Trp Ser Gln Ala Ala Pro Met Ala Glu Gly
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Gly Gly Gln Asn His His Glu Val Val Lys Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg Gln Glu Asn Pro Cys Gly Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Met \$165\$<210> SEQ ID NO 10 <211> LENGTH: 148 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEOUENCE: 10 Ala Pro Met Ala Glu Gly Gly Gln Asn His His Glu Val Val Lys 10 Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu 20 25 30Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys 40 Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg Gln Glu Asn Pro Cys Gly Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Met 145 <210> SEO ID NO 11 <211> LENGTH: 606 <212> TYPE: DNA <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 11 atgaactttc tgctgtcttg ggtgcattgg agccttgcct tgctgctcta cctccaccat gccaagtggt cccaggctgc acccatggca gaaggaggag ggcagaatca tcacgaagtg 120 gtgaagttca tggatgtcta tcagcgcagc tactgccatc caatcgagac cctggtggac

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Gly Gly Gln Asn His His Glu Val Val Lys Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln 35 40 45
Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu 50 55 60
Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu 65 70 75 80
Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro 85 90 95
Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His 100 105 110
Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys 115 120 125
Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg Gln Glu Asn Pro Cys Gly 130 135 140
Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr 145 150 155 160
Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln 165 170 175
Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Ser Leu Thr Arg Lys Asp 180 185 190
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Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu 50 55 60

Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys 35 40 45

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Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg Gln Glu Asn Pro Cys Gly Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Ser Leu Thr Arg Lys Asp <210> SEQ ID NO 14 <211> LENGTH: 209 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 14 Met Asn Phe Leu Leu Ser Trp Val His Trp Ser Leu Ala Leu Leu Leu 1 5 5 10 15 Tyr Leu His His Ala Lys Trp Ser Gln Ala Ala Pro Met Ala Glu Gly 25 Gly Gly Gln Asn His His Glu Val Val Lys Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys 120 Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg Gln Glu Lys Lys Ser Val Cys Gly Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg 200 Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 15 <212> TYPE: PRT

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n Asp Glu 50 $\,$ 60 Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe 90 Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg 100 105 Gln Glu Lys Lys Ser Val Arg Gly Lys Gly Lys Gly Gln Lys Arg Lys Arg Lys Lys Ser Arg Tyr Lys Ser Trp Ser Val Pro Cys Gly Pro Cys 135 Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys 150 Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 18 <211> LENGTH: 232 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 18 Met Asn Phe Leu Leu Ser Trp Val His Trp Ser Leu Ala Leu Leu Leu Tyr Leu His His Ala Lys Trp Ser Gln Ala Ala Pro Met Ala Glu Gly Gly Gly Gln Asn His His Glu Val Val Lys Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro 90 Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His

105

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Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu 25

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Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Ser Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr

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90 Glu Glu Phe Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln 100 105 Ser Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu 120 Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Lys Ala Arg Gln Glu Asn Pro Cys Gly Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 25 <211> LENGTH: 164 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Bos taurus <400> SEOUENCE: 25 Ala Pro Met Ala Glu Gly Gly Gln Lys Pro His Glu Val Val Lys Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Phe Cys Arg Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Phe Ile Phe Lys Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Ser Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Phe Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Ser Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu 90 Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Lys Ala Arg Gln 105 Glu Asn Pro Cys Gly Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val 120 Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 26 <211> LENGTH: 645 <212> TYPE: DNA <213> ORGANISM: Canis familiaris <400> SEQUENCE: 26 atgaactttc tgctctcttg ggtgcattgg agccttgcct tgctgctcta cctccaccat gccaagtggt cccaggctgc gcctatggca ggaggagagc acaaacccca cgaagtggtg 120 aagttcatgg acgtctacca gcgcagctac tgccgtccca ttgagaccct ggtggacatc ttccaggagt accctgacga gatcgagtac atcttcaagc catcctgcgt gcccctgatg 240 cggtgtgggg gctgctgtaa tgatgagggc ctagagtgcg tgcccactga ggagttcaac 300 atcaccatgc agattatgcg gatcaaacct catcaaggcc agcacatagg ggagatgagt

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Gly 145	Lys	Gly	Lys	Gly	Gln 150	Lys	Arg	Lys	Arg	Lys 155	Lys	Ser	Arg	Tyr	Lys 160		
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Asp	Ile	Phe 35	Gln	Glu	Tyr	Pro	Asp 40	Glu	Ile	Glu	Tyr	Ile 45	Phe	Lys	Pro		

Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly

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55 Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Phe Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met 70 75 Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Ser Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg Gln 105 Glu Lys Lys Ser Ile Arg Gly Lys Gly Lys Gly Gln Lys Arg Lys Arg Lys Lys Ser Arg Tyr Lys Pro Trp Ser Val Pro Cys Gly Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 29 <211> LENGTH: 651 <212> TYPE: DNA <213 > ORGANISM: Gallus gallus <400> SEQUENCE: 29 atgaactttc tgctcacttg gatccactgg gggctggcgg cgctgctcta tctgcagagc 60 geggagttgt egaaggetge teeggeeetg ggggatgggg ageggaagee caaegaagtt 120 atcaaattcc tggaagtcta cgaacgcagc ttctgcagga caattgagac cctggtggac 180 attttccagg agtaccctga tgaggtggag tacatattca ggccatcctg tgtgcctctg 240 atgagatgtg cgggttgctg cggcgatgag ggcctagaat gtgtccctgt ggatgtgtac 300 aacgtcacga tggagatcgc aagaattaaa ccccatcaga gtcagcacat agcgcacatg 360 agottottac agcacagtaa atgtgactgo agaccaaaga aagatgtcaa aaataaacaa 420 gaaaaaaaat caaagcgagg aaaggggaag ggtcaaaaga gaaagcgcaa gaaaggccgg tacaaaccac ccagctttca ctgtgagcct tgctcagaga ggagaaagca cttgtttgta caagatcccc agacctgtaa atgttcctgc aaattcacag actcacgttg caagtcgagg cagettgagt taaacgageg caettgeaga tgtgaaaaac egagaeggtg a <210> SEQ ID NO 30 <211> LENGTH: 216 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Gallus gallus <400> SEQUENCE: 30 Met Asn Phe Leu Leu Thr Trp Ile His Trp Gly Leu Ala Ala Leu Leu 10 Tyr Leu Gln Ser Ala Glu Leu Ser Lys Ala Ala Pro Ala Leu Gly Asp Gly Glu Arg Lys Pro Asn Glu Val Ile Lys Phe Leu Glu Val Tyr Glu 40 Arg Ser Phe Cys Arg Thr Ile Glu Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Val Glu Tyr Ile Phe Arg Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu 70 75

Met Arg Cys Ala Gly Cys Cys Gly Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Val Asp Val Tyr Asn Val Thr Met Glu Ile Ala Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Ser Gln His Ile Ala His Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Ser Lys Cys Asp Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Val Lys Asn Lys Gln Glu Lys Lys Ser Lys Arg Gly Lys Gly Lys Gly Gln Lys Arg Lys Arg Lys Lys Gly Arg 145 150 155 160 Tyr Lys Pro Pro Ser Phe His Cys Glu Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Phe Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ser Arg Gln Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Glu Lys Pro Arg Arg 210 215 <210> SEO ID NO 31 <211> LENGTH: 190 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Gallus gallus <400> SEQUENCE: 31 Ala Pro Ala Leu Gly Asp Gly Glu Arg Lys Pro Asn Glu Val Ile Lys 10 Phe Leu Glu Val Tyr Glu Arg Ser Phe Cys Arg Thr Ile Glu Thr Leu 25 Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Val Glu Tyr Ile Phe Arg 40 Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Ala Gly Cys Cys Gly Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Val Asp Val Tyr Asn Val Thr Met Glu Ile Ala Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Ser Gln His Ile Ala His Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Ser Lys Cys Asp Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Val Lys Asn Lys Gln Glu Lys Lys Ser Lys Arg Gly Lys Gly Lys Gly Gln Lys Arg Lys Arg Lys Lys Gly Arg Tyr Lys Pro Pro Ser Phe His Cys Glu Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys 150 155 Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Phe Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ser Arg Gln Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Glu Lys Pro Arg Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 32 <211> LENGTH: 573 <212> TYPE: DNA <213 > ORGANISM: Equus caballus

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ttcctacage atage	aaatg tgaatgcaga ccaaa	gaaag ataaagcaag gcaagaaaat	420
ccctgtgggc cttgc	tcaga gcggagaaag cattt:	gtttg tacaagatcc gcagacgtgt	480
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Glu His Lys Thr 35	His Glu Val Val Lys Ph 40	e Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg 45	
Ser Tyr Cys Arg 50	Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu Va 55	l Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr 60	
Pro Asp Glu Ile 65	Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys Pr 70	o Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met 75 80	
Arg Cys Gly Gly	Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gl 85 90	y Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr 95	
Ala Glu Phe Asn 100	Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Me 105	t Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln 110	
Ser Gln His Ile 115	Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Le 120	u Gln His Ser Lys Cys Glu 125	
Cys Arg Pro Lys 130	Lys Asp Lys Ala Arg Gl 135	n Glu Asn Pro Cys Gly Pro 140	
Cys Ser Glu Arg 145	Arg Lys His Leu Phe Va 150	l Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys 155 160	
Lys Cys Ser Cys	Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Ar 165 17	g Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln Leu 0 175	
Glu Leu Asn Glu 180	Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys As 185	p Lys Pro Arg 190	
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<210> SEQ ID NO 34
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<400> SEQUENCE: 34

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Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys Pro

<213> ORGANISM: Equus caballus

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Ser	Сув 50	Val	Pro	Leu	Met	Arg 55	СЛа	Gly	Gly	СЛа	60 GÀa	Asn	Asp	Glu	Gly	
Leu 65	Glu	Cys	Val	Pro	Thr 70	Ala	Glu	Phe	Asn	Ile 75	Thr	Met	Gln	Ile	Met 80	
Arg	Ile	Lys	Pro	His 85	Gln	Ser	Gln	His	Ile 90	Gly	Glu	Met	Ser	Phe 95	Leu	
Gln	His	Ser	Lys 100	Cys	Glu	Cys	Arg	Pro 105	Lys	Lys	Asp	Lys	Ala 110	Arg	Gln	
Glu	Asn	Pro 115	Cys	Gly	Pro	Cys	Ser 120	Glu	Arg	Arg	Lys	His 125	Leu	Phe	Val	
Gln	Asp 130	Pro	Gln	Thr	Cys	Lys 135	Cys	Ser	Cys	Lys	Asn 140	Thr	Asp	Ser	Arg	
Cys 145	Lys	Ala	Arg	Gln	Leu 150	Glu	Leu	Asn	Glu	Arg 155	Thr	Сув	Arg	Cys	Asp 160	
Lys	Pro	Arg	Arg													
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aagt	tcat	gg a	acgto	ctac	ca go	cgaaq	gctad	c tgo	ccgto	ccaa	ttga	agac	ect (ggtgg	gacatc	180
ttco	cagga	agt a	accc	gac	ga ga	ataga	agtad	c ato	ettea	aagc	cgt	cctg	gt q	geege	ctgatg	240
cgct	gtgo	cag g	gctg	ctgta	aa c	gatga	aagco	ctg	ggagt	gcg	tgc	ccac	gtc a	agaga	agcaac	300
atca	accat	gc a	agato	catgo	eg ga	atcaa	aacct	cad	ccaaa	agcc	agca	acata	agg a	agaga	atgagc	360
ttc	ctaca	agc a	acago	ccgat	g to	gaat	gcaga	a cca	aaaga	aaag	acaç	ggaca	aaa 🤅	gccaç	gaaaat	420
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aaat	gtto	ect g	gcaaa	aaaca	ac aç	gacto	cgcgt	tgo	caago	gcga	ggca	agcti	ga 🤅	gttaa	aacgaa	540
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1	71011	1110	Бей	5	DCI	111	vai	1115	10	1111	БСС	mia	БСи	15	Dea	
Tyr	Leu	His	His 20	Ala	ГÀв	Trp	Ser	Gln 25	Ala	Ala	Pro	Thr	Thr 30	Glu	Gly	
Glu	Gln	35 Lya	Ser	His	Glu	Val	Ile 40	Lys	Phe	Met	Asp	Val 45	Tyr	Gln	Arg	
Ser	Tyr 50	Сув	Arg	Pro	Ile	Glu 55	Thr	Leu	Val	Asp	Ile 60	Phe	Gln	Glu	Tyr	
Pro 65	Asp	Glu	Ile	Glu	Tyr 70	Ile	Phe	Lys	Pro	Ser 75	CÀa	Val	Pro	Leu	Met 80	
Arg	Cys	Ala	Gly	Сув 85	Cys	Asn	Asp	Glu	Ala 90	Leu	Glu	Cys	Val	Pro 95	Thr	

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Ser Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln
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Ser Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Ser Arg Cys Glu
Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Thr Lys Pro Glu Lys Lys Ser Val Arg
Gly Lys Gly Lys Gly Gln Lys Arg Lys Arg Lys Lys Ser Arg Phe Lys
Ser Trp Ser Val His Cys Glu Pro Cys Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu
Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp
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Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg
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Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Ala Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Ala
Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Ser Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met
Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Ser Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu
Gln His Ser Arg Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Thr Lys Pro
Glu Lys Lys Ser Val Arg Gly Lys Gly Lys Gly Gln Lys Arg Lys Arg
Lys Lys Ser Arg Phe Lys Ser Trp Ser Val His Cys Glu Pro Cys Ser
Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys Lys Cys
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60

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ttcctacagc	acaacaa	atg t	gaato	gcaga	a cca	aaaga	aaag	ataç	gagc	gag g	gcaaq	gaaaat	4	420
ccctgtgggc	cttgcto	aga g	cggac	gaaag	g cat	ttgt	ttg	taca	aagat	cc q	gcaga	acgtgt	4	480
aaatgttcct	gcaaaaa	acac a	gacto	gegt	tgo	caago	gcga	ggca	agcti	ga	gttaa	aacgaa	5	540
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Asp Gln Lys 35	Pro Hi	ls Glu	Val	Val 40	Lys	Phe	Met	Asp	Val 45	Tyr	Gln	Arg		
Ser Tyr Cys 50	Arg Pı	o Ile	Glu 55	Thr	Leu	Val	Asp	Ile 60	Phe	Gln	Glu	Tyr		
Pro Asp Glu 65	Ile Gl	lu Tyr 70	Ile	Phe	Lys	Pro	Ser 75	CAa	Val	Pro	Leu	Met 80		
Arg Cys Gly	Gly Cy 85		Asn	Asp	Glu	Gly 90	Leu	Glu	СЛа	Val	Pro 95	Thr		
Glu Glu Phe	Asn Il	le Thr	Met	Gln	Ile 105	Met	Arg	Ile	ГЛа	Pro 110	His	Gln		
Gly Gln His	Ile Gl	ly Glu	Met	Ser 120	Phe	Leu	Gln	His	Asn 125	Lys	CAa	Glu		
Cys Arg Pro	Γλα Γ ^λ	vs Asp	Arg 135	Ala	Arg	Gln	Glu	Asn 140	Pro	CÀa	Gly	Pro		
Cys Ser Glu 145	Arg Aı	g Lys 150	His	Leu	Phe	Val	Gln 155	Asp	Pro	Gln	Thr	Cys 160		
Lya Cya Ser	Cys Ly		Thr	Asp	Ser	Arg 170	Сув	Lys	Ala	Arg	Gln 175	Leu		
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Asp Ile Phe	Gln Gl	lu Tyr	Pro	Asp 40	Glu	Ile	Glu	Tyr	Ile 45	Phe	Lys	Pro		

Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly

												COII	C 111,	aca		
	50					55					60					
Leu 65	Glu	Cys	Val	Pro	Thr 70	Glu	Glu	Phe	Asn	Ile 75	Thr	Met	Gln	Ile	Met 80	
Arg	Ile	Lys	Pro	His 85	Gln	Gly	Gln	His	Ile 90	Gly	Glu	Met	Ser	Phe 95	Leu	
Gln	His	Asn	Lys 100	Сув	Glu	Сув	Arg	Pro 105	Lys	Lys	Asp	Arg	Ala 110	Arg	Gln	
Glu	Asn	Pro 115	Cys	Gly	Pro	Сув	Ser 120	Glu	Arg	Arg	Lys	His 125	Leu	Phe	Val	
Gln	Asp 130	Pro	Gln	Thr	Cys	Lys 135	Cys	Ser	Cys	Lys	Asn 140	Thr	Asp	Ser	Arg	
Cys 145	Lys	Ala	Arg	Gln	Leu 150	Glu	Leu	Asn	Glu	Arg 155	Thr	Cys	Arg	Cys	Asp 160	
Lys	Pro	Arg	Arg													
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ttco	cagga	ıgt a	eccc	gato	ga ga	ataga	agtat	ato	ettea	agc	cgt	cctgt	gt g	geeec	taatg	240
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cact	gtga	igc c	ttgt	tcaç	ga go	ggag	gaaag	g cat	ttgt	ttg	tcca	aagat	ca ç	gcaga	cgtgt	480
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Tyr	Leu	His	His 20	Ala	Lys	Trp	Ser	Gln 25	Ala	Ala	Pro	Thr	Thr 30	Glu	Gly	
Glu	Gln	Tys 35	Ala	His	Glu	Val	Val 40	Lys	Phe	Met	Asp	Val 45	Tyr	Gln	Arg	
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Pro 65	Asp	Glu	Ile	Glu	Tyr 70	Ile	Phe	Lys	Pro	Ser 75	СЛа	Val	Pro	Leu	Met 80	
Arg	Сув	Ala	Gly	Сув 85	Сув	Asn	Asp	Glu	Ala 90	Leu	Glu	Сув	Val	Pro 95	Thr	
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Glu Lys Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg 115

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<210> SEQ ID NO 47 <211> LENGTH: 188 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 47 Met Ser Pro Leu Leu Arg Arg Leu Leu Leu Ala Ala Leu Leu Gln Leu Ala Pro Ala Gln Ala Pro Val Ser Gln Pro Asp Ala Pro Gly His Gln Arg Lys Val Val Ser Trp Ile Asp Val Tyr Thr Arg Ala Thr Cys Gln Pro Arg Glu Val Val Pro Leu Thr Val Glu Leu Met Gly Thr Val Ala Lys Gln Leu Val Pro Ser Cys Val Thr Val Gln Arg Cys Gly Gly 65 70 75 80Cys Cys Pro Asp Asp Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Gly Gln His Gln 85 90 95 Val Arg Met Gln Ile Leu Met Ile Arg Tyr Pro Ser Ser Gln Leu Gly Glu Met Ser Leu Glu Glu His Ser Gln Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys 120 Lys Asp Ser Ala Val Lys Pro Asp Ser Pro Arg Pro Leu Cys Pro Arg 135 Cys Thr Gln His His Gln Arg Pro Asp Pro Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Arg Cys Arg Arg Arg Ser Phe Leu Arg Cys Gln Gly Arg Gly Leu Glu Leu 170 Asn Pro Asp Thr Cys Arg Cys Arg Lys Leu Arg Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 48 <211> LENGTH: 167 <212> TYPE: PRT <213> ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 48 Pro Val Ser Gln Pro Asp Ala Pro Gly His Gln Arg Lys Val Val Ser Trp Ile Asp Val Tyr Thr Arg Ala Thr Cys Gln Pro Arg Glu Val Val Val Pro Leu Thr Val Glu Leu Met Gly Thr Val Ala Lys Gln Leu Val 35 40 45 Pro Ser Cys Val Thr Val Gln Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Pro Asp Asp 50 $\,$ 60 Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Gly Gln His Gln Val Arg Met Gln Ile Leu Met Ile Arg Tyr Pro Ser Ser Gln Leu Gly Glu Met Ser Leu Glu Glu His Ser Gln Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Lys Asp Ser Ala Val 105 Lys Pro Asp Ser Pro Arg Pro Leu Cys Pro Arg Cys Thr Gln His His 120 Gln Arg Pro Asp Pro Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Arg Cys Arg Arg Arg Ser 135

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Phe Leu Arg Cys Gln Gly Arg Gly Leu Glu Leu Asn Pro Asp Thr Cys 155 Arg Cys Arg Lys Leu Arg Arg 165 <210> SEQ ID NO 49 <211> LENGTH: 207 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 49 Met Ser Pro Leu Leu Arg Arg Leu Leu Leu Ala Ala Leu Leu Gln Leu Ala Pro Ala Gln Ala Pro Val Ser Gln Pro Asp Ala Pro Gly His Gln $\hbox{Arg Lys Val Val Ser Trp Ile Asp Val Tyr Thr Arg Ala Thr Cys Gln } \\$ Pro Arg Glu Val Val Val Pro Leu Thr Val Glu Leu Met Gly Thr Val Ala Lys Gln Leu Val Pro Ser Cys Val Thr Val Gln Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Pro Asp Asp Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Gly Gln His Gln 85 90 Val Arg Met Gln Ile Leu Met Ile Arg Tyr Pro Ser Ser Gln Leu Gly 100 105 Glu Met Ser Leu Glu Glu His Ser Gln Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Lys Asp Ser Ala Val Lys Pro Asp Arg Ala Ala Thr Pro His His Arg 135 Pro Gln Pro Arg Ser Val Pro Gly Trp Asp Ser Ala Pro Gly Ala Pro 155 150 Ser Pro Ala Asp Ile Thr His Pro Thr Pro Ala Pro Gly Pro Ser Ala 170 165 His Ala Ala Pro Ser Thr Thr Ser Ala Leu Thr Pro Gly Pro Ala Ala 185 Ala Ala Ala Asp Ala Ala Ala Ser Ser Val Ala Lys Gly Gly Ala 195 200 <210> SEQ ID NO 50 <211> LENGTH: 186 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 50 Pro Val Ser Gln Pro Asp Ala Pro Gly His Gln Arg Lys Val Val Ser Trp Ile Asp Val Tyr Thr Arg Ala Thr Cys Gln Pro Arg Glu Val Val 25 Val Pro Leu Thr Val Glu Leu Met Gly Thr Val Ala Lys Gln Leu Val 40 Pro Ser Cys Val Thr Val Gln Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Pro Asp Asp Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Gly Gln His Gln Val Arg Met Gln Ile 70 75

Leu Met Ile Arg Tyr Pro Ser Ser Gln Leu Gly Glu Met Ser Leu Glu

Glu His Ser Gln Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Lys Asp Ser Ala Val 105 Lys Pro Asp Arg Ala Ala Thr Pro His His Arg Pro Gln Pro Arg Ser Val Pro Gly Trp Asp Ser Ala Pro Gly Ala Pro Ser Pro Ala Asp Ile Thr His Pro Thr Pro Ala Pro Gly Pro Ser Ala His Ala Ala Pro Ser Thr Thr Ser Ala Leu Thr Pro Gly Pro Ala Ala Ala Ala Asp Ala Ala Ala Ser Ser Val Ala Lys Gly Gly Ala <210> SEQ ID NO 51 <211> LENGTH: 419 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 51 Met His Leu Leu Gly Phe Phe Ser Val Ala Cys Ser Leu Leu Ala Ala 10 Ala Leu Leu Pro Gly Pro Arg Glu Ala Pro Ala Ala Ala Ala Phe 20 25 30 Glu Ser Gly Leu Asp Leu Ser Asp Ala Glu Pro Asp Ala Gly Glu Ala 40 Thr Ala Tyr Ala Ser Lys Asp Leu Glu Glu Gln Leu Arg Ser Val Ser Ser Val Asp Glu Leu Met Thr Val Leu Tyr Pro Glu Tyr Trp Lys Met Tyr Lys Cys Gln Leu Arg Lys Gly Gly Trp Gln His Asn Arg Glu Gln Ala Asn Leu Asn Ser Arg Thr Glu Glu Thr Ile Lys Phe Ala Ala Ala 105 His Tyr Asn Thr Glu Ile Leu Lys Ser Ile Asp Asn Glu Trp Arg Lys Thr Gln Cys Met Pro Arg Glu Val Cys Ile Asp Val Gly Lys Glu Phe Gly Val Ala Thr Asn Thr Phe Phe Lys Pro Pro Cys Val Ser Val Tyr Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Ser Glu Gly Leu Gln Cys Met Asn Thr \$165\$Ser Thr Ser Tyr Leu Ser Lys Thr Leu Phe Glu Ile Thr Val Pro Leu Ser Gln Gly Pro Lys Pro Val Thr Ile Ser Phe Ala Asn His Thr Ser Cys Arg Cys Met Ser Lys Leu Asp Val Tyr Arg Gln Val His Ser Ile 215 Ile Arg Arg Ser Leu Pro Ala Thr Leu Pro Gln Cys Gln Ala Ala Asn 230 235 Lys Thr Cys Pro Thr Asn Tyr Met Trp Asn Asn His Ile Cys Arg Cys Leu Ala Gln Glu Asp Phe Met Phe Ser Ser Asp Ala Gly Asp Asp Ser Thr Asp Gly Phe His Asp Ile Cys Gly Pro Asn Lys Glu Leu Asp Glu

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		2/5					280					285			
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Asn	Lys	Leu	Phe	Pro 325	Ser	Gln	Cys	Gly	Ala 330	Asn	Arg	Glu	Phe	Asp 335	Glu
Asn	Thr	Сув	Gln 340	Сув	Val	Cas	Lys	Arg 345	Thr	Càa	Pro	Arg	Asn 350	Gln	Pro
Leu	Asn	Pro 355	Gly	Lys	Cys	Ala	Cys 360	Glu	Cys	Thr	Glu	Ser 365	Pro	Gln	Lys
Cys	Leu 370	Leu	Lys	Gly	Lys	Lys 375	Phe	His	His	Gln	Thr 380	Cys	Ser	Сув	Tyr
Arg 385	Arg	Pro	Cys	Thr	Asn 390	Arg	Gln	Lys	Ala	Cys 395	Glu	Pro	Gly	Phe	Ser 400
Tyr	Ser	Glu	Glu	Val 405	CAa	Arg	Cys	Val	Pro 410	Ser	Tyr	Trp	Lys	Arg 415	Pro
Gln	Met	Ser													
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Gln	Leu	Val	Gln 20	Gly	Ser	Ser	Asn	Glu 25	His	Gly	Pro	Val	30 Lys	Arg	Ser
Ser	Gln	Ser 35	Thr	Leu	Glu	Arg	Ser 40	Glu	Gln	Gln	Ile	Arg 45	Ala	Ala	Ser
Ser	Leu 50	Glu	Glu	Leu	Leu	Arg 55	Ile	Thr	His	Ser	Glu 60	Asp	Trp	Lys	Leu
Trp 65	Arg	Сув	Arg	Leu	Arg 70	Leu	Lys	Ser	Phe	Thr 75	Ser	Met	Asp	Ser	Arg 80
Ser	Ala	Ser	His	Arg 85	Ser	Thr	Arg	Phe	Ala 90	Ala	Thr	Phe	Tyr	Asp 95	Ile
Glu	Thr	Leu	Lys 100	Val	Ile	Asp	Glu	Glu 105	Trp	Gln	Arg	Thr	Gln 110	Сув	Ser
Pro	Arg	Glu 115	Thr	Сув	Val	Glu	Val 120	Ala	Ser	Glu	Leu	Gly 125	Lys	Ser	Thr
Asn	Thr 130	Phe	Phe	Lys	Pro	Pro 135	Cys	Val	Asn	Val	Phe 140	Arg	Cys	Gly	Gly
Cys 145	Cys	Asn	Glu	Glu	Ser 150	Leu	Ile	Cys	Met	Asn 155	Thr	Ser	Thr	Ser	Tyr 160
Ile	Ser	Lys	Gln	Leu 165	Phe	Glu	Ile	Ser	Val 170	Pro	Leu	Thr	Ser	Val 175	Pro
Glu	Leu	Val	Pro 180	Val	Lys	Val	Ala	Asn 185	His	Thr	Gly	СЛа	Lys 190	Сла	Leu
Pro	Thr	Ala 195	Pro	Arg	His	Pro	Tyr 200	Ser	Ile	Ile	Arg	Arg 205	Ser	Ile	Gln
Ile	Pro 210	Glu	Glu	Asp	Arg	Cys 215	Ser	His	Ser	Lys	Lys 220	Leu	Cys	Pro	Ile
Asp	Met	Leu	Trp	Asp	Ser	Asn	Lys	Cya	Lys	Cys	Val	Leu	Gln	Glu	Glu

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Asn Pro Leu Ala Gly Thr Glu Asp His Ser His Leu Gln Glu Pro Ala 245 250 Leu Cys Gly Pro His Met Met Phe Asp Glu Asp Arg Cys Glu Cys Val Cys Lys Thr Pro Cys Pro Lys Asp Leu Ile Gln His Pro Lys Asn Cys Ser Cys Phe Glu Cys Lys Glu Ser Leu Glu Thr Cys Cys Gln Lys His Lys Leu Phe His Pro Asp Thr Cys Ser Cys Glu Asp Arg Cys Pro Phe His Thr Arg Pro Cys Ala Ser Gly Lys Thr Ala Cys Ala Lys His Cys Arg Phe Pro Lys Glu Lys Arg Ala Ala Gln Gly Pro His Ser Arg Lys Asn Pro <210> SEO ID NO 53 <211> LENGTH: 149 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEOUENCE: 53 Met Pro Val Met Arg Leu Phe Pro Cys Phe Leu Gln Leu Leu Ala Gly 10 Leu Ala Leu Pro Ala Val Pro Pro Gln Gln Trp Ala Leu Ser Ala Gly Asn Gly Ser Ser Glu Val Glu Val Val Pro Phe Gln Glu Val Trp Gly 40 Arg Ser Tyr Cys Arg Ala Leu Glu Arg Leu Val Asp Val Val Ser Glu Tyr Pro Ser Glu Val Glu His Met Phe Ser Pro Ser Cys Val Ser Leu Leu Arg Cys Thr Gly Cys Cys Gly Asp Glu Asn Leu His Cys Val Pro Val Glu Thr Ala Asn Val Thr Met Gln Leu Leu Lys Ile Arg Ser Gly 105 Asp Arg Pro Ser Tyr Val Glu Leu Thr Phe Ser Gln His Val Arg Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Leu Arg Glu Lys Met Lys Pro Glu Arg Cys Gly Asp Ala Val Pro Arg Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 54 <211> LENGTH: 131 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 54 Leu Pro Ala Val Pro Pro Gln Gln Trp Ala Leu Ser Ala Gly Asn Gly Ser Ser Glu Val Glu Val Val Pro Phe Gln Glu Val Trp Gly Arg Ser 25 Tyr Cys Arg Ala Leu Glu Arg Leu Val Asp Val Val Ser Glu Tyr Pro

Ser Glu Val Glu His Met Phe Ser Pro Ser Cys Val Ser Leu Leu Arg 55 Cys Thr Gly Cys Cys Gly Asp Glu Asn Leu His Cys Val Pro Val Glu Thr Ala Asn Val Thr Met Gln Leu Leu Lys Ile Arg Ser Gly Asp Arg Pro Ser Tyr Val Glu Leu Thr Phe Ser Gln His Val Arg Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Leu Arg Glu Lys Met Lys Pro Glu Arg Cys Gly Asp Ala Val Pro Arg Arg 130 <210> SEQ ID NO 55 <211> LENGTH: 170 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 55 Met Pro Val Met Arg Leu Phe Pro Cys Phe Leu Gln Leu Leu Ala Gly 10 Leu Ala Leu Pro Ala Val Pro Pro Gln Gln Trp Ala Leu Ser Ala Gly 25 Asn Gly Ser Ser Glu Val Glu Val Val Pro Phe Gln Glu Val Trp Gly 40 Arg Ser Tyr Cys Arg Ala Leu Glu Arg Leu Val Asp Val Val Ser Glu Tyr Pro Ser Glu Val Glu His Met Phe Ser Pro Ser Cys Val Ser Leu Leu Arg Cys Thr Gly Cys Cys Gly Asp Glu Asn Leu His Cys Val Pro 90 Val Glu Thr Ala Asn Val Thr Met Gln Leu Leu Lys Ile Arg Ser Gly 100 105 Asp Arg Pro Ser Tyr Val Glu Leu Thr Phe Ser Gln His Val Arg Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Leu Arg Glu Lys Met Lys Pro Glu Arg Arg Pro 135 Lys Gly Arg Gly Lys Arg Arg Glu Lys Gln Arg Pro Thr Asp Cys His Leu Cys Gly Asp Ala Val Pro Arg Arg 165 170 <210> SEQ ID NO 56 <211> LENGTH: 152 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 56 Leu Pro Ala Val Pro Pro Gln Gln Trp Ala Leu Ser Ala Gly Asn Gly 10 Ser Ser Glu Val Glu Val Val Pro Phe Gln Glu Val Trp Gly Arg Ser 25 Tyr Cys Arg Ala Leu Glu Arg Leu Val Asp Val Val Ser Glu Tyr Pro 40 Ser Glu Val Glu His Met Phe Ser Pro Ser Cys Val Ser Leu Leu Arg

55

Cys Thr Gly Cys Cys Gly Asp Glu Asn Leu His Cys Val Pro Val Glu Thr Ala Asn Val Thr Met Gln Leu Leu Lys Ile Arg Ser Gly Asp Arg Pro Ser Tyr Val Glu Leu Thr Phe Ser Gln His Val Arg Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Leu Arg Glu Lys Met Lys Pro Glu Arg Arg Pro Lys Gly Arg Gly Lys Arg Arg Arg Glu Lys Gln Arg Pro Thr Asp Cys His Leu Cys Gly Asp Ala Val Pro Arg Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 57 <211> LENGTH: 221 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 57 Met Pro Val Met Arg Leu Phe Pro Cys Phe Leu Gln Leu Leu Ala Gly 10 Leu Ala Leu Pro Ala Val Pro Pro Gln Gln Trp Ala Leu Ser Ala Gly 25 Asn Gly Ser Ser Glu Val Glu Val Val Pro Phe Gln Glu Val Trp Gly 40 Arg Ser Tyr Cys Arg Ala Leu Glu Arg Leu Val Asp Val Val Ser Glu Tyr Pro Ser Glu Val Glu His Met Phe Ser Pro Ser Cys Val Ser Leu Leu Arg Cys Thr Gly Cys Cys Gly Asp Glu Asn Leu His Cys Val Pro 90 Val Glu Thr Ala Asn Val Thr Met Gln Leu Leu Lys Ile Arg Ser Gly 100 105 Asp Arg Pro Ser Tyr Val Glu Leu Thr Phe Ser Gln His Val Arg Cys Glu Cys Arg His Ser Pro Gly Arg Gln Ser Pro Asp Met Pro Gly Asp 135 Phe Arg Ala Asp Ala Pro Ser Phe Leu Pro Pro Arg Arg Ser Leu Pro Met Leu Phe Arg Met Glu Trp Gly Cys Ala Leu Thr Gly Ser Gln Ser Ala Val Trp Pro Ser Ser Pro Val Pro Glu Glu Ile Pro Arg Met His Pro Gly Arg Asn Gly Lys Lys Gln Gln Arg Lys Pro Leu Arg Glu Lys Met Lys Pro Glu Arg Cys Gly Asp Ala Val Pro Arg Arg 215 <210> SEQ ID NO 58 <211> LENGTH: 203 <212> TYPE: PRT <213> ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 58

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Ser Ser Glu Val Glu Val Val Pro Phe Gln Glu Val Trp Gly Arg Ser

Tyr Cys Arg Ala Leu Glu Arg Leu Val Asp Val Val Ser Glu Tyr Pro Ser Glu Val Glu His Met Phe Ser Pro Ser Cys Val Ser Leu Leu Arg Cys Thr Gly Cys Cys Gly Asp Glu Asn Leu His Cys Val Pro Val Glu Thr Ala Asn Val Thr Met Gln Leu Leu Lys Ile Arg Ser Gly Asp Arg Pro Ser Tyr Val Glu Leu Thr Phe Ser Gln His Val Arg Cys Glu Cys Arg His Ser Pro Gly Arg Gln Ser Pro Asp Met Pro Gly Asp Phe Arg Ala Asp Ala Pro Ser Phe Leu Pro Pro Arg Arg Ser Leu Pro Met Leu 130 135 Trp Pro Ser Ser Pro Val Pro Glu Glu Ile Pro Arg Met His Pro Gly Arg Asn Gly Lys Lys Gln Gln Arg Lys Pro Leu Arg Glu Lys Met Lys 185 Pro Glu Arg Cys Gly Asp Ala Val Pro Arg Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 59 <211> LENGTH: 345 <212> TYPE: PRT <213> ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 59 Met Ser Leu Phe Gly Leu Leu Leu Thr Ser Ala Leu Ala Gly Gln Arg Gln Gly Thr Gln Ala Glu Ser Asn Leu Ser Ser Lys Phe Gln Phe Ser Ser Asn Lys Glu Gln Asn Gly Val Gln Asp Pro Gln His Glu Arg 40 Ile Ile Thr Val Ser Thr Asn Gly Ser Ile His Ser Pro Arg Phe Pro His Thr Tyr Pro Arg Asn Thr Val Leu Val Trp Arg Leu Val Ala Val 65 70 75 80 Glu Glu Asn Val Trp Ile Gln Leu Thr Phe Asp Glu Arg Phe Gly Leu Glu Asp Pro Glu Asp Asp Ile Cys Lys Tyr Asp Phe Val Glu Val Glu Glu Pro Ser Asp Gly Thr Ile Leu Gly Arg Trp Cys Gly Ser Gly Thr 120 Val Pro Gly Lys Gln Ile Ser Lys Gly Asn Gln Ile Arg Ile Arg Phe 135 Val Ser Asp Glu Tyr Phe Pro Ser Glu Pro Gly Phe Cys Ile His Tyr 155 Asn Ile Val Met Pro Gln Phe Thr Glu Ala Val Ser Pro Ser Val Leu Pro Pro Ser Ala Leu Pro Leu Asp Leu Leu Asn Asn Ala Ile Thr Ala

			180					185					190		
Phe	Ser	Thr 195	Leu	Glu	Asp	Leu	Ile 200	Arg	Tyr	Leu	Glu	Pro 205	Glu	Arg	Trp
Gln	Leu 210	Asp	Leu	Glu	Asp	Leu 215	Tyr	Arg	Pro	Thr	Trp 220	Gln	Leu	Leu	Gly
Lys 225	Ala	Phe	Val	Phe	Gly 230	Arg	ГÀз	Ser	Arg	Val 235	Val	Asp	Leu	Asn	Leu 240
Leu	Thr	Glu	Glu	Val 245	Arg	Leu	Tyr	Ser	Сув 250	Thr	Pro	Arg	Asn	Phe 255	Ser
Val	Ser	Ile	Arg 260	Glu	Glu	Leu	Lys	Arg 265	Thr	Asp	Thr	Ile	Phe 270	Trp	Pro
Gly	Cys	Leu 275	Leu	Val	Lys	Arg	Cys 280	Gly	Gly	Asn	CAa	Ala 285	CÀa	CÀa	Leu
His	Asn 290	Cya	Asn	Glu	CÀa	Gln 295	Cys	Val	Pro	Ser	J00	Val	Thr	ГÀа	Lys
Tyr 305	His	Glu	Val	Leu	Gln 310	Leu	Arg	Pro	Lys	Thr 315	Gly	Val	Arg	Gly	Leu 320
His	Lys	Ser	Leu	Thr 325	Asp	Val	Ala	Leu	Glu 330	His	His	Glu	Glu	Cys 335	Asp
CAa	Val	Cys	Arg 340	Gly	Ser	Thr	Gly	Gly 345							
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Val	Ser	Thr 35	Asn	Gly	Ser	Ile	His 40	Ser	Pro	Arg	Phe	Pro 45	His	Thr	Tyr
Pro	Arg 50	Asn	Thr	Val	Leu	Val 55	Trp	Arg	Leu	Val	Ala 60	Val	Glu	Glu	Asn
Val 65	Trp	Ile	Gln	Leu	Thr 70	Phe	Asp	Glu	Arg	Phe 75	Gly	Leu	Glu	Asp	Pro 80
Glu	Asp	Asp	Ile	Сув 85	Lys	Tyr	Asp	Phe	Val 90	Glu	Val	Glu	Glu	Pro 95	Ser
Asp	Gly	Thr	Ile 100	Leu	Gly	Arg	Trp	Cys 105	Gly	Ser	Gly	Thr	Val 110	Pro	Gly
Lys	Gln	Ile 115	Ser	Lys	Gly	Asn	Gln 120	Ile	Arg	Ile	Arg	Phe 125	Val	Ser	Asp
Glu	Tyr 130	Phe	Pro	Ser	Glu	Pro 135	Gly	Phe	Cys	Ile	His 140	Tyr	Asn	Ile	Val
Met 145	Pro	Gln	Phe	Thr	Glu 150	Ala	Val	Ser	Pro	Ser 155	Val	Leu	Pro	Pro	Ser 160
Ala	Leu	Pro	Leu	Asp 165	Leu	Leu	Asn	Asn	Ala 170	Ile	Thr	Ala	Phe	Ser 175	Thr
Leu	Glu	Asp	Leu 180	Ile	Arg	Tyr	Leu	Glu 185	Pro	Glu	Arg	Trp	Gln 190	Leu	Asp
Leu	Glu	Asp 195	Leu	Tyr	Arg	Pro	Thr 200	Trp	Gln	Leu	Leu	Gly 205	Lys	Ala	Phe

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Val Phe Gly Arg Lys Ser Arg Val Val Asp Leu Asn Leu Leu Thr Glu
Glu Val Arg Leu Tyr Ser Cys Thr Pro Arg Asn Phe Ser Val Ser Ile
Arg Glu Glu Leu Lys Arg Thr Asp Thr Ile Phe Trp Pro Gly Cys Leu
                        250
Leu Val Lys Arg Cys Gly Gly Asn Cys Ala Cys Cys Leu His Asn Cys
Asn Glu Cys Gln Cys Val Pro Ser Lys Val Thr Lys Lys Tyr His Glu
Val Leu Gln Leu Arg Pro Lys Thr Gly Val Arg Gly Leu His Lys Ser
Leu Thr Asp Val Ala Leu Glu His His Glu Glu Cys Asp Cys Val Cys
Arg Gly Ser Thr Gly Gly
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<212> TYPE: PRT
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<400> SEQUENCE: 61
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Tyr Leu His His Ala Lys Trp Ser Gln Ala Ala Pro Met Ala Glu Gly
Gly Gly Gln Asn His His Glu Val Val Lys Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln
                  40
Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu
                     55
Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu
Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro
                                   90
Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His
Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys
Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg Gln Glu Lys Cys Asp Lys
Pro Arg Arg
<210> SEQ ID NO 62
<211> LENGTH: 121
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Ala Pro Met Ala Glu Gly Gly Gln Asn His His Glu Val Val Lys
Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu Thr Leu
                    25
Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr Ile Phe Lys
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Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Ala Arg Gln Glu Lys Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 63 <211> LENGTH: 211 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 63 Met Arg Thr Leu Ala Cys Leu Leu Leu Gly Cys Gly Tyr Leu Ala His Val Leu Ala Glu Glu Ala Glu Ile Pro Arg Glu Val Ile Glu Arg 25 Leu Ala Arg Ser Gln Ile His Ser Ile Arg Asp Leu Gln Arg Leu Leu 40 Glu Ile Asp Ser Val Gly Ser Glu Asp Ser Leu Asp Thr Ser Leu Arg Ala His Gly Val His Ala Thr Lys His Val Pro Glu Lys Arg Pro Leu Pro Ile Arg Arg Lys Arg Ser Ile Glu Glu Ala Val Pro Ala Val Cys 90 Lys Thr Arg Thr Val Ile Tyr Glu Ile Pro Arg Ser Gln Val Asp Pro 100 105 Thr Ser Ala Asn Phe Leu Ile Trp Pro Pro Cys Val Glu Val Lys Arg Cys Thr Gly Cys Cys Asn Thr Ser Ser Val Lys Cys Gln Pro Ser Arg 135 Val His His Arg Ser Val Lys Val Ala Lys Val Glu Tyr Val Arg Lys Lys Pro Lys Leu Lys Glu Val Gln Val Arg Leu Glu Glu His Leu Glu Cys Ala Cys Ala Thr Thr Ser Leu Asn Pro Asp Tyr Arg Glu Glu Asp 185 Thr Gly Arg Pro Arg Glu Ser Gly Lys Lys Arg Lys Arg Lys Arg Leu Lys Pro Thr 210 <210> SEQ ID NO 64 <211> LENGTH: 196 <212> TYPE: PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 64 Met Arg Thr Leu Ala Cys Leu Leu Leu Gly Cys Gly Tyr Leu Ala 10 His Val Leu Ala Glu Glu Ala Glu Ile Pro Arg Glu Val Ile Glu Arg

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Leu Ala Arg Ser Gln Ile His Ser Ile Arg Asp Leu Gln Arg Leu Leu Glu Ile Asp Ser Val Gly Ser Glu Asp Ser Leu Asp Thr Ser Leu Arg Ala His Gly Val His Ala Thr Lys His Val Pro Glu Lys Arg Pro Leu Pro Ile Arg Arg Lys Arg Ser Ile Glu Glu Ala Val Pro Ala Val Cys Lys Thr Arg Thr Val Ile Tyr Glu Ile Pro Arg Ser Gln Val Asp Pro Thr Ser Ala Asn Phe Leu Ile Trp Pro Pro Cys Val Glu Val Lys Arg Cys Thr Gly Cys Cys Asn Thr Ser Ser Val Lys Cys Gln Pro Ser Arg Val His His Arg Ser Val Lys Val Ala Lys Val Glu Tyr Val Arg Lys Lys Pro Lys Leu Lys Glu Val Gln Val Arg Leu Glu Glu His Leu Glu Cys Ala Cys Ala Thr Thr Ser Leu Asn Pro Asp Tyr Arg Glu Glu Asp 185 Thr Asp Val Arg 195 <210> SEO ID NO 65 <211> LENGTH: 1338 <212> TYPE · PRT <213 > ORGANISM: Homo sapiens <400> SEQUENCE: 65 Met Val Ser Tyr Trp Asp Thr Gly Val Leu Leu Cys Ala Leu Leu Ser Cys Leu Leu Thr Gly Ser Ser Ser Gly Ser Lys Leu Lys Asp Pro Glu Leu Ser Leu Lys Gly Thr Gln His Ile Met Gln Ala Gly Gln Thr Leu His Leu Gln Cys Arg Gly Glu Ala Ala His Lys Trp Ser Leu Pro Glu Met Val Ser Lys Glu Ser Glu Arg Leu Ser Ile Thr Lys Ser Ala Cys Gly Arg Asn Gly Lys Gln Phe Cys Ser Thr Leu Thr Leu Asn Thr Ala Gln Ala Asn His Thr Gly Phe Tyr Ser Cys Lys Tyr Leu Ala Val Pro Thr Ser Lys Lys Glu Thr Glu Ser Ala Ile Tyr Ile Phe Ile 120 Ser Asp Thr Gly Arg Pro Phe Val Glu Met Tyr Ser Glu Ile Pro Glu Ile Ile His Met Thr Glu Gly Arg Glu Leu Val Ile Pro Cys Arg Val Thr Ser Pro Asn Ile Thr Val Thr Leu Lys Lys Phe Pro Leu Asp Thr Leu Ile Pro Asp Gly Lys Arg Ile Ile Trp Asp Ser Arg Lys Gly Phe 185 Ile Ile Ser Asn Ala Thr Tyr Lys Glu Ile Gly Leu Leu Thr Cys Glu

Ala	Thr 210	Val	Asn	Gly	His	Leu 215	Tyr	Lys	Thr	Asn	Tyr 220	Leu	Thr	His	Arg
Gln 225	Thr	Asn	Thr	Ile	Ile 230	Asp	Val	Gln	Ile	Ser 235	Thr	Pro	Arg	Pro	Val 240
Lys	Leu	Leu	Arg	Gly 245	His	Thr	Leu	Val	Leu 250	Asn	CAa	Thr	Ala	Thr 255	Thr
Pro	Leu	Asn	Thr 260	Arg	Val	Gln	Met	Thr 265	Trp	Ser	Tyr	Pro	Asp 270	Glu	Lys
Asn	Lys	Arg 275	Ala	Ser	Val	Arg	Arg 280	Arg	Ile	Asp	Gln	Ser 285	Asn	Ser	His
Ala	Asn 290	Ile	Phe	Tyr	Ser	Val 295	Leu	Thr	Ile	Asp	300 Lys	Met	Gln	Asn	Lys
Asp 305	Lys	Gly	Leu	Tyr	Thr 310	Сув	Arg	Val	Arg	Ser 315	Gly	Pro	Ser	Phe	Lys 320
Ser	Val	Asn	Thr	Ser 325	Val	His	Ile	Tyr	Asp 330	Lys	Ala	Phe	Ile	Thr 335	Val
ГÀа	His	Arg	Lys 340	Gln	Gln	Val	Leu	Glu 345	Thr	Val	Ala	Gly	350 Lys	Arg	Ser
Tyr	Arg	Leu 355	Ser	Met	ГÀа	Val	360	Ala	Phe	Pro	Ser	Pro 365	Glu	Val	Val
Trp	Leu 370	Lys	Asp	Gly	Leu	Pro 375	Ala	Thr	Glu	Lys	Ser 380	Ala	Arg	Tyr	Leu
Thr 385	Arg	Gly	Tyr	Ser	Leu 390	Ile	Ile	Lys	Asp	Val 395	Thr	Glu	Glu	Asp	Ala 400
Gly	Asn	Tyr	Thr	Ile 405	Leu	Leu	Ser	Ile	Lys 410	Gln	Ser	Asn	Val	Phe 415	Lys
Asn	Leu	Thr	Ala 420	Thr	Leu	Ile	Val	Asn 425	Val	Lys	Pro	Gln	Ile 430	Tyr	Glu
Lys	Ala	Val 435	Ser	Ser	Phe	Pro	Asp 440	Pro	Ala	Leu	Tyr	Pro 445	Leu	Gly	Ser
Arg	Gln 450	Ile	Leu	Thr	Cys	Thr 455	Ala	Tyr	Gly	Ile	Pro 460	Gln	Pro	Thr	Ile
Lys 465	Trp	Phe	Trp	His	Pro 470	CÀa	Asn	His	Asn	His 475	Ser	Glu	Ala	Arg	Cys 480
Asp	Phe	Сув	Ser	Asn 485	Asn	Glu	Glu	Ser	Phe 490	Ile	Leu	Asp	Ala	Asp 495	Ser
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Ala	Ile	Ser 675	Ser	Ser	Thr	Thr	Leu 680	Asp	СЛа	His	Ala	Asn 685	Gly	Val	Pro
Glu	Pro 690	Gln	Ile	Thr	Trp	Phe 695	Lys	Asn	Asn	His	Lys 700	Ile	Gln	Gln	Glu
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Cys	Asp	Phe	e Gly	y Lei	ı Ala	a Arç	g As	ap I	le Ty	yr L	ys A:	∍n i	Pro A	Aap :	Fyr

Leu Gln Ile Thr Cys Arg Gly Gln Arg Asp Leu Asp Trp Leu Trp Pro 50 60

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Asn	Ile	Thr 35	Glu	Glu	Ser	His	Val 40	Ile	Asp	Thr	Gly	Asp 45	Ser	Leu	Ser
Ile	Ser 50	Cys	Arg	Gly	Gln	His 55	Pro	Leu	Glu	Trp	Ala 60	Trp	Pro	Gly	Ala
Gln 65	Glu	Ala	Pro	Ala	Thr 70	Gly	Asp	Lys	Asp	Ser 75	Glu	Asp	Thr	Gly	Val 80
Val	Arg	Asp	Сув	Glu 85	Gly	Thr	Asp	Ala	Arg 90	Pro	Tyr	Сув	Lys	Val 95	Leu
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Thr 145	Leu	Leu	Val	Asn	Arg 150	Lys	Asp	Ala	Met	Trp 155	Val	Pro	Cys	Leu	Val 160
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Pro 465	Cys	ГЛа	Met	Phe	Ala 470	Gln	Arg	Ser	Leu	Arg 475	Arg	Arg	Gln	Gln	Gln 480
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What is claimed:

- 1. A human vascular endothelial growth factor A (VEGF-A) receptor antagonist comprising a substitution at an isoleucine residue corresponding to I83 in SEQ ID NO:4 or SEQ ID NO:13, wherein the substitution is a lysine, arginine or histidine, and the substitution results in a decrease in bioactivity as compared to wild-type VEGF.
- 2. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 1, wherein the VEGF-A receptor antagonist comprises an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 4, and I83 is substituted by a lysine, arginine or histidine.
- 3. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 1, wherein the VEGF-A receptor antagonist comprises an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 13, and I83 is substituted by a ⁵⁵ lysine, arginine or histidine.
- **4**. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim **1**, which is expressed as at least one of subunits of a homodimer or heterodiner having two subunits.
- **5.** The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim **1**, wherein the antagonist contains one or more additional basic amino acid substitutions at the position(s) corresponding to the residues selected from the group consisting of positions E44, E67, E72, E73 and Q87 of SEQ ID NO: 4.
- **6**. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim **5**, wherein the 65 additional substitutions are selected from the group consisting of E72R and E73R of SEQ ID NO:4.

- 7. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 5, wherein the additional substitutions are selected from the group consisting of E72K and E73K of SEQ ID NO:4.
- **8**. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim **5**, wherein the additional substitution is at a position corresponding to E44R or E44K of SEQ ID NO:4.
- 9. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 5, wherein the additional substitution is at a position corresponding to Q87K or Q87L of SEQ ID NO:4.
- 10. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 5, wherein the additional substitution corresponds to E67K of SEQ ID NO:4.
- 11. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 1, wherein interaction of the VEGF-A receptor antagonist and a native VEGF-A receptor results in inhibition of angiogenesis.
- 12. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 11, wherein the native VEGF-A receptor is kinase insert domain receptor (KDR).
- 13. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 5, wherein the antagonist contains the amino acid substitutions corresponding to E72R, E73R and 183K of SEQ ID NO:4.
- 14. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 5, wherein the antagonist contains the amino acid substitutions corresponding to E44R, E72R, E73R and I83K of SEQ ID NO:4.

- **15**. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim **1**, further comprising an amino acid substitution at a position corresponding to C146 or C160 of SEQ ID NO:4.
- **16**. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim **1**, wherein the amino acid substitution is at a position corresponding to 5 C146S or C160S of SEQ ID NO:4.
- 17. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 1, further comprising an amino acid substitution at a position corresponding to A111 and/or A148 of SEQ ID NO: 4.
- **18**. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim **1**, wherein 10 the amino acid substitution is at a position corresponding to A111P and/or A148P of SEQ ID NO:4.
- 19. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 1, further comprising a toxin.
- **20**. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim **19**, wherein 15 the toxin is selected from the group consisting of a *Pseudomonas* exotoxin (PE), a Diphtheria toxin (DT), ricin toxin, abrin toxin, anthrax toxins, shiga toxin, botulism toxin, tetanus

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toxin, cholera toxin, maitotoxin, palytoxin, ciguatoxin, texitilotoxin, batrachotoxin, alpha conotoxin, taipoxin, tetrodotoxin, alpha tityustoxin, saxitoxin, anatoxin, microcystin, aconitine, exfoliatin toxins A, exfoliatin B, an enterotoxin, toxic shock syndrome toxin (TSST-1), *Y. pestis* toxin and a gas gangrene toxin.

21. The VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim 1, comprising a VEGF-A selected from the group consisting of VEGF₁₆₅ (SEQ ID NO:4), VEGF_{165b} (SEQ ID NO:13), VEGF₁₂₁ (SEQ ID NO:6), VEGF₁₄₅ (SEQ ID NO:8), VEGF₁₄₈ (SEQ ID NO:10), VEGF₁₈₃ (SEQ ID NO:15), VEGF₁₈₉ (SEQ ID NO:17), and VEGF₂₀₆ (SEQ ID NO:19), wherein I83 is substituted by lysine, arginine or histidine.

22. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the VEGF-A receptor antagonist of claim **1** and at least one excipient.

* * * * *